THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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RECOVERY AND REFORMATION

AS THE first snow flurries of the winter begin to fall, and bitter winds out of the north grimly herald the approach of the worst struggle against cold and hunger and distress that the nation has ever faced, it is no mere coincidence that squalls of raucous criticism and real storms of discontent should break out against the President's program of recovery, and that ugly mutterings of revolt against his fundamental plan of national reformation should be heard. The farm strike in the Middle West is only the most spectacular of these signs of disappointment and reaction. There are indications that the dairymen of New York and Connecticut and Pennsylvania may again attempt a similar movement. The declaration of a coal strike in the Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, region, by a new union of miners, fighting not only against the operators but also against a rival union, is only one main instance of disturbed labor conditions throughout the country. Simultaneously with these events, there is apparent a widespread attack upon the NRA, not merely directed against details of its administration, but against it as a policy. Its total abandonment is urged in many quarters. A large number of newspapers have led the campaign of criticism, professing to be particularly alarmed by the alleged threat to the liberty of the press which they considered to be inherent in the NRA code for newspapers. The alarmist war-cries of "Sovietism," or "dictatorship," or "unconstitutional," have been raised vehemently and persistently.

So far as we have been able to judge, however, no alternative plan to that of the President has been proposed. If there is any concrete idea behind the outbreak of fault-finding, it apparently is pure reaction. The notion seems to be that if all the fads and follies foisted upon the country by idealistic (or socialistic) college professors, so strangely chosen by the President as advisers in place of practical business men and politicians, are swept away, all that would then be needed to return the country to prosperity would be to let the practical business men and politicians have a free hand to run the national affairs by hitching the economic and financial apparatus to the "natural forces of recovery" which are presumed to be re-exerting themselves, and which may be safely re-

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lied upon if only the idealistic reformers are prevented from meddling with the affair.

That seems to be the idea—and the only discoverable one—back of the barrage of criticism. And it seems to us to be utterly futile. Of course, it is true, as the critics point out, that the recovery program is creaking and jarring, and here and there parts of it have broken down. It is also true that less than four million men and women have been restored to wage earning, and that many times that number are still unemployed. A hundred other accusations of the sort are true. Nevertheless, the really great fact which a thousand minor criticisms cannot alter, although they may disastrously conceal it for a time, still stands evident—namely, that President Roosevelt has gloriously led this nation toward a real reformation of its entire polity, and that the nation as a whole is aware of that fact, and is determined to go ahead with him, and under his leadership.

Among the flood of editorial comments upon the present situation, the most truly enlightening one which we have seen is in the pages of a foreign review, *G. K.'s Weekly*, of London. "The time has come for thoughtful observers to be discouraged about the experiment inaugurated by President Roosevelt," says *G. K.'s Weekly*, "as no doubt thoughtful observers were discouraged soon after Hercules began his attempts to cleanse the Augean stables." The English observer disclaims any special knowledge of American conditions. Like Will Rogers, all he knows about the situation is what he reads in the papers, and he knows enough about contemporary journalism not to trust in all he reads. But G. K. Chesterton's paper—like G. K. C. himself—possesses a philosophy by means of which to judge the events recorded by newspapers much more accurately than most of the newspapers can judge them. For that philosophy is solidly grounded upon Christian principles. It is a fundamental axiom of that philosophy that social justice—the welfare of the masses of mankind—is more important than the sort of national "prosperity" which means enormous wealth and socially perilous power for a few privileged cliques and classes, and poverty or destitution, or the permanent danger of poverty and destitution, to the masses of the people. That is also the philosophy which this journal holds. We believe that it also has become the dominant philosophy of the great masses of Americans, and that it finds its practical leader in President Roosevelt.

As *G. K.'s Weekly* goes on to say: "Since March last the United States have been transformed by an internal revolution of which President Roosevelt is the soul. The revolution has not succeeded—nor have many other revolutions in the past succeeded half way through. But there is this to be said for President Roosevelt and his advisers, that they have taken extravagant care throughout not to dangle before the eyes of the American people the glittering carrot of Utopia. If anything they have been pessimistic. . . . Yet it is something to have achieved that much of a revolution that is recognized as monumental though incomplete and hazardous, where the forces against any chance of success at all were overwhelming. For President Roosevelt has had to deal at once with unemployment, financial chaos, the opposition of vested interests, corruption in all organs of government, and all departments of commerce, European complications and vital developments in Asia."

The real name of the revolution not wrought but understood and led and directed by President Roosevelt is "reformation." Walt Whitman prophesied long ago that, "all changes in appearances are without avail, without a change in that which underlies all appearances." It is truly a reformation of the spirit which this nation seeks, and which its President is leading. Wonderful results have already come from his leadership. Greater results will come if that leadership is maintained. The inaugural address is the charter of that "internal revolution" which has occurred in the American nation. "Yes, the money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may now restore that temple to the ancient truths. The measure of the restoration lies in the extent to which we apply social values more noble than mere monetary profit."

If the President's program should be overthrown, either by panic among the people, or by stupid reaction, only a quasi-dictatorship of financial and industrial forces can be expected, as an alternative to the sheer chaos which simply returning to the old régime would mean. And that condition at its best would be worse than any discomforts or delays which the people may suffer in following President Roosevelt on the road of reformation.

WEEK BY WEEK

The Post at Prague

AMERICA is minding its own business, and on the whole this fact may be greeted with explosions of gratitude. But none of us can afford to forget that a very great deal of our business pays no attention to national boundary lines. Europe is still of vital importance to our well-being; and the rather battered appearance of the Continent only makes it more imperative to do the old-fashioned thing of being on the job. We think that among the posts where energy and sagacity can be displayed, none is more important than Prague. This city is, first of all, the key to a great industrial region upon which

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millions of people draw for goods, and it is also, by reason of the political traditions developed since the war, a seat of highly influential political activity. There is no other place in Europe where watching American interests could be more profitable. Accordingly we venture to suggest that the government ought to place there a representative fitted for the task by long experience and the right sort of endowments. If career men, as the veterans of the consular service are termed, deserve recognition, then surely one post for one of them is Prague.

Throw-outs at Home

MUNICIPAL government in the United States gives signs, judging by the recent elections, of turning its back on the professional political bosses and their highly organized machines. The triumph of "Fusion" in New York City over Tammany and over a hastily organized independent Democratic party variously reputed and denied to have connections with President Roosevelt, had the proportions of a popular revolt. At the same time, in Philadelphia the far more impregnable Republican Vare machine which has ruled America's third largest city without a break for more than two decades, had its candidates swept out of all important offices. This was the Vare machine's first defeat since 1911. In Pittsburgh the powerful Mellon machine candidate for mayor was seen to be decisively beaten by his youthful Democratic opponent on the basis of the almost complete returns as this was being written. In Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the first Democrat to hold the mayor's office there in thirty-five years was elected, and a Democrat has carried Scranton. In Cleveland, however, the Cuyahoga County Democratic machine lost the mayorality to the Republican candidate. But in Rochester the Democrats swept Monroe County, taking control of the City Council, for the first time in thirty years. The O'Connell machine in Albany seems to have been about the one large exception to withstand the desire of the voters to try a change; it piled up a greater than normal Democratic majority for the incumbent mayor, John Boyd Thacher. The fact that the Democrats carried Virginia in state elections by three to one is hardly in the same category of news as the foregoing. In Cincinnati a Republican attempt to bring that city back into the arena of partizan politics by removing the Charter form of government in operation there for eight years, was according to almost complete returns, successfully resisted.

THIS cross-section of urban politics, as complete as space and our time of going to press permits, gives a fairly clear picture of the prevailing political trend in times of difficulty in a democracy. The tendency is to blame everything on the incumbents and to try something new. The resultant reform movements have been generally short-lived in the past because the reform—or "fusion," as they are usually called—governments are not able to work the wonders they promise in the heat of seeking office. They find that in the amplitude of offices in a large city, in spite of the highest motives and the greatest diligence at the top, it is not always possible to exclude individuals whose consciences are pliable or extinct. In a democracy, political analysts tell us, governments rarely rise above the general average of the public intelligence and morality. As this becomes apparent to the mass of independent voters who determine the success of fusion movements, their reform ardor cools and the local machines, cleaned of carbon, reoiled and modernized, usually sweep smoothly into gear again. Reform governments always have an added disadvantage in the fact that they are heirs to all the sins of their predecessors, principally those of accounts to be paid in money not in the cash register and therefore up to the reform governments to extract from a pained citizenry. This duty, no matter how well it is done, chills once loving hearts and gives the "outs" an opportunity to cry for a return of the good old days. In spite of these various anomalies, it can no doubt be stated in conclusion that reform governments do serve a useful purpose, not only in what they themselves effect, but also in the reforms they exact of necessity in the prevailing political factions in the various localities, the machines that with uninterrupted use, in the parlance of the machine shop, "get all carboned up."

Prohibition Passes

THE DEATHKNELL of prohibition is ringing as we write this. In spite of our never having liked the deceased, there is inevitably a kind of solemn regret at the passing. We wish to recall the good things and inter the evil with the bones, contrary to what the cynic poet says. There undoubtedly was a great deal of laudable human enterprise that put over prohibition, a real liking for a clear-eyed, healthy manhood and a right dislike for the ravages to intelligence and to moral responsibility and physical health that tragically characterize the habitual drunkard. The most shocking accompaniment of prohibition, unforeseen and surely furthest from its purpose, was the spread of drinking hard, very hard, liquors from being a male perquisite to its being a commonplace among young women. This is the kind of tragedy that seems to result in the home of intolerance and to mock the most unselfish and the purest motives of the moral tyrant. The Catholic Church, wise with experience, with a fair degree of unanimity was unsympathetic to prohibition in this country. Moral gains are interior gains in individuals, subtle and intricate, depending on

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revelation and struggle, never finished, it believes, and not attained by exterior force. Day after day the Mass is celebrated, the Gospel preached, all over the world, in a constant struggle against the powers of evil and to instill grace into the individual soul, the lone sinner that rejoices heaven by his conversion, the lonely lost individual sheep. Complete abstinence as a willingly embraced asceticism, either for simple motives of health or higher motives, and temperance, a golden mean, the common sense that is good for human nature's daily use, these we hope to see better served now that prohibition has passed. And the Church which has without question never relaxed its emphasis on these things while it waited to see what the State could accomplish by its attempted tyranny, we know will continue its efforts for the maintenance of human nature's highest dignity.

Reply to a Communist

GOVERNOR RITCHIE has replied promptly and pointedly to the charge formally made to him by Robert Minor, Communist leader and recent candidate for the New York mayoralty, that the hanging of a Negro in Maryland was "a frame-up and murder." We are naturally not privy to the sources of Mr. Minor's information. However, his mere unsupported statement that a criminal injustice has been done in the execution of this particular convicted murderer is so exactly in line with the tactics his group employs toward the Negro, as part of a system, that it will tend to inspire more indignation than belief among really responsible citizens. It is not easy to overstate the Negro's wrongs, legal or social. That is the chief reason why the usual attitude of Communism is indefensible. Its first aim is not the righting of those wrongs, but the further inflaming of their victims for its own purposes. Claiming to be the Negro's friend, it renders no acknowledgments to the growing company of his fellow beings and fellow citizens who are striving earnestly to help him and to awaken the national conscience in his regard. It tries to discredit them whenever it can, and it is perfectly willing to envenom his mind with any chance poison it can distill from circumstances. In the present case, as Governor Ritchie informed Mr. Minor—expressly on the ground that "anyone who runs for so high an office as the Mayor of New York should be interested in the truth"—two juries found the prisoner guilty, and three higher courts, the last the federal Supreme Court, discovered "no reasonable doubt about the correctness of the decisions." On the face of it, the Governor had every right to conclude: "I consider it inexcusable that you, a supposedly responsible person, and without any knowledge of the facts, should presume to charge that there had been a frame-up, or that Lee was innocent."

England and the Motor Traffic

BRITAIN is enjoying a wave of comparative prosperity, greeted quite sceptically but acknowledged with thanks. And just when the shops of London are reporting more business, a problem arises which disturbs everyone more than he can tell you. The automobile traffic in and around the metropolis has exacted a toll of human lives which even an American city might well envy. During part of the year just past, 3,000 people have been killed in motor accidents. Meanwhile the number of licensed drivers has increased, so that still greater holocausts may be expected in the future. What can be done about it? We wish we knew. It sometimes seems as if cars were like the germs of old—irresistible and invincible. Mute, inglorious Miltons are mowed down by them, and the manufacturers never seem to give a whoop. Of course they do. In England the debate has now settled down into a talk about speed. Motor men are loath to welcome in a state of affairs when every effort to get home in a hurry may end in jail, and they point to the fact that in days when speed laws were more rigid, accidents also happened. But the other side is aroused and vocal. During past weeks huge audiences of pedestrians have gathered, to be harangued in particular by literary celebrities. The writing man is notoriously averse to crossing streets in an undignified manner. To our way of thinking, however, *vox populi* has in this instance confounded the artist in words. Put him to shame, in fact. Every London journal has been crammed with letters to the editor, which are beautifully indignant even when nothing more. We quote from the London *Times:* "Sir: No one except a lunatic or a motorist can seriously maintain that it is not dangerous to drive at a rate exceeding that of an express train in a public thoroughfare. The point made in defense of the preposterous theory so dear to the motorist's heart that 'speed is no element of danger' is that a man may drive dangerously at ten miles an hour. This is too true, but the same man could be ten times as dangerous if he drove at one hundred miles an hour. How wise was Dr. Johnson when he said, 'Sir, people feel vacuity less in motion.' " Which is, we should say, a bit tart but also rather nice.

Killing Cows

BY ORGANIZATION and agitation the dairy farmers of New York State recently secured an increase in the price paid them by middlemen for their milk. Part of this increase was immediately passed on to the consumer at the rate of $.02 a quart. The position of the producer thereby was immediately improved. The extent of the improvement, however, was far less than the producer desired, with the result that a recurrence of September's strike

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has been constantly in the air and upon this new strike threats have been made. Besieged on all sides the State Milk Board has made drastic efforts to conciliate organization and independent dairymen, but the matter as yet is not entirely resolved. While the middleman's profits were cut by the action of the state board, the real burden fell, and falls, on the consumer. With the poor, but still self-supporting consumer this burden has been heavy especially in families where there are children. Oftener than not it has meant the decrease of a quart or more per family each day. Whether this decrease or some other cause has brought about the present great surplus of milk in New York State is not apparent, but the fact remains that today there exist about 147,000 cows which the State Board proposes to destroy in order to control the milk flow.

DURING the winter $5,000,000 will be asked of the Legislature for the purpose of compensating farmers for destroyed cattle. The price in vogue is $3 per cow, the federal government pays $9 more, while the farmer usually collects $11 more as "salvage," the carcass being purchased for conversion into cooked meats. Even this, it is estimated, will not wholly take care of the surplus, with the result that an effort is being made to increase consumption through relief agencies. Buffalo, for example, hopes to get the unemployed to drink 25,000 more quarts daily. The irony of the situation is that children of families in which there are unemployed have had their supply cut to create this surplus. On the face of it the spending of $5,000,000 to kill wholesome milch cows appears merely as a sop to the farmers. While there are children in need of milk the state might do better to pay the producer the $.02 per quart directly, allowing families obliged to buy milk a greater supply at less cost.

GERMANY AND PEACE

IT IS still by no means possible to say what the effect of Germany's abrupt departure from the League of Nations and the Disarmament Conference may eventually be. But the observer can—and one thinks, ought—to summarize those important deductions which are already plain. The protagonists in the debate are five: Germany, Great Britain, the United States, France and Italy. One year ago, the views of the first three powers were relatively the same. They desired to persuade France and Italy to abandon a quarrel about arms equality which could lead to no good and which must result, in addition, to the increase of craving for more armament among the other peoples of Europe. With such earnestness did British and American spokesmen press the matter that a very considerable readiness to disarm was manifest. The recent French governments (incidentally, one cannot too much regret the fall of the Daladier Cabinet) were supported by majorities favoring peace and anxious to throw off the dominion of the "armament kings." In like manner Signor Mussolini was obviously convinced that resort to war would be the least intelligent thing Italy could do. In short, there was a real chance that—despite the myriad difficulties in the way—disarmament of an appreciable kind was just around the corner.

We believe that no one who has followed recent events in Europe closely will doubt the rightness of what has just been said. If further proof be needed, the record of the budgetary problems which every government has faced is not a sealed book. And so it is genuinely tragic that the emergence of a Hitlerite Germany coincided with the appearance of a more genuine peace sentiment than has existed since the close of the war. The writings, speeches and actions of the new Berlin government startled everyone and frightened a good many. Europe has long since known that a new war will occur only when Germany is ready to fight it; and the spectacle of a "leader" committed to Bismarck and Frederick the Great was enough to put the damper on more disarmament sentiment than actually existed at the close of 1932. Nor was that all. Germany suddenly became the only power (with the probable exception of Poland) without a strongly organized pacifistic minority. Or in other words, Germany became the only country in which a certain amount of public opinion was not present to endorse the Kellogg Pact outlawing war as a diplomatic instrument.

Europe is far more realistic about trenches and liquid fire than we are in the United States. Very few people really believe that the future will see no fighting; but Europeans actually want war less than do Americans. The result is that the attitude of Germany makes war seem quite possible, and with that makes the German threat very reprehensible. Of course it is now plain that a great deal more should have been done to support the Bruening government in this and other respects. The German thesis that disarmament should have been effected all around is undeniably right, and from this point of view the birth of a once ardently nationalistic and militaristic Italy, which dampened the ardor of pacific French citizens, must be considered a great misfortune. Had Mussolini drilled less in 1924-1930, he would not have to make so many speeches in favor of peace now. The fact of the matter is that under cover of this Franco-Italian debate, all the "new states" created by the Versailles Treaty produced armies which automatically made the Germans conscious of being unfairly discriminated against and with that more susceptible to pleas from the extreme

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Right. After all, few Americans would remain utterly calm if, as a result of some international arrangement, Mexico were given armed force sufficient to invade and subdue their country.

All that is in the distance. What are we to think of the German threat to peace? This question should be put in an American way, since what concerns us is not who happens to be on top in Europe but who will start a war which no one can presuppose without a shudder at the ensuing losses of goods, of well-being, of regard for ethical principle and of culture. The fact of the matter is that Germany is to a great extent rearmed. Naturally she is still without the materials of modern combat—an airplane fleet, heavy artillery, tanks and so forth. But the readiness to fight has been reawakened in no uncertain fashion. There are many groups the members of which have already pledged their lives to the fatherland in the event of a new war. On almost every school-ground, little boys are being taught the elements of military life. Large divisions of the S.S., the S.A. and the A.D.—as the principal uniformed bodies are termed — have already learned more than the National Army knew at the end of 1917 in the United States. Beyond any question, the Germans could put an army of three million men in the field, if they had the means to equip and maintain such a force.

Even more worthy of note is the extent to which the will for peace has been discredited. Pacifism is a sin than which there can be no graver. The penalties inflicted upon those who, for religious reasons, opposed war as a method of settling international disputes have been far too little noticed by students of Hitler Germany. Members of the Friedensbund of German Catholics, for example, have been deprived of their jobs, put into prison, silenced and robbed of their property with a relentlessness as alarming as it is thorough. Every educator suspected of favoring the ends to which the League of Nations is supposedly dedicated has been hounded out of the classroom, regardless of whether the school in which he or she taught was confessional or not. The struggle of Evangelical youth groups to maintain a separate existence from the rampant Hitlerjugend was to a great extent fought on this issue; and one thinks that it was only at the cost of acceding to jingoism that the Lutheran Church was able to retain a measure of control over young people still faithful to religious ideals. In Catholic Germany—as of course in some other parts of Catholic Europe—the peace encyclicals of recent Popes are no longer read or mentioned, though as recently as 1932 the German bishops had endorsed those letters with vigor and enthusiasm.

But when all these things have been added up, the curious fact remains that those in power do not want war. It sounds paradoxical—this beating of ultra-fanatical drums on the one hand, and this realization that conflict would be ruinous to Germany on the other. Yet the simple truth remains. Mr. Hitler's coterie of supporters were in essence actuated by the belief that only a restoration of military power would bring Germany the friendships she—well, requires. In all the coteries which figured more or less in the March overthrow the idea of "balance of power" was the central topic of discussion. Why had twelve years of the republic failed to bring political advancement to a nation eagerly desiring treaty revision? The answer always was, for these gentlemen, the lack of power behind the addresses delivered by German diplomats at Geneva and elsewhere. Here the example of Italy seemed impressive. Mussolini had made Italy a factor in European affairs by developing an army and navy. The lesson which a good many people close to Hitler drew was: go ye and do likewise. Of course much else contributed to the formation of this state of mind. But we cannot enter into further detail here.

All this has worked itself out in practice with considerable naïveté. The course of Hitler diplomacy is so decidedly redolent of the soapbox that many foreigners are entirely misled. Thus there is no doubt that men now prominent in Berlin actually believed that a "strong Germany" would find an immediate ally in Great Britain. Starting from the correct premise that the French and the English see many things differently, leading Hitlerites were childish enough to think Downing Street would hang out joyful bunting if the equivalent of a "he man" appeared in Prussia. Consequently the disappointment at the attitude taken by Sir John Simon—the only attitude he could possibly take—produced a real crisis in German political reflection. With the brusqueness which characterizes him, Hitler immediately turned round and tried to play the French against the English! It has even been rumored that Berlin has been ready to make big concessions in the Saar Valley if Paris will welcome a "strong neighbor." Which merely goes to show that Mr. Hitler's whole deck of cards seems to be without a trump.

The international position of the Germans has never been worse. Yet that is precious little comfort to anybody else. These people will not abandon the struggle for their ideology as easily as one would like to suppose. And if things continue at the present pace, America—and indeed the whole world—is in for cultural as well as financial losses of tremendous proportions. We can do nothing to alter the situation that is not already being done. There are moments in the life of humanity which seem to indicate that the beneficent Providence of God is no longer deserved.

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THE NEW DEAL AND THE BANKS

By OLIVER McKEE, JR.

The new government control over our financial institutions and operations in this country is not generally appreciated because, unlike the NRA and the A.A.A., it has not had the same kind of publicity nor has it had the same kind of coordinated plan. Mr. McKee's article is valuable, therefore, because it draws together into a comprehensive review the various steps which the government has taken to restore public confidence in our banking system which was rapidly approaching the panic stage, ruining thousands.—The Editors.

WHEN the ordeal which has put to so searching a test both the character and the institutions of the American people, permits a survey in retrospect, the collapse of our banking system will stand out in bold relief. Though the precipitate fall in stock values, the wage and salary slashes, and the loss of jobs had blighted the hopes of millions, there were yet many millions more upon whom the shadow of the depression had not fallen. It was the bank holiday and the closing of thousands of banks, big and little, that drove home to the American people as a whole the fact that the republic faced one of the greatest crises in its history. Literally overnight, men and women found themselves penniless, their life savings gone, their security against old age and other vicissitudes of life taken away, and even their bread and butter for the morrow dependent on economic contigencies apparently beyond human control. Those in "comfortable" circumstances, in many instances, were hit as hard as those whose meager savings from years of labor were wiped out. Time heals many scars, but it cannot erase, in the memories of those who look back at the 1933 crisis, the poignant sense of insecurity and the haunting fears then endured by so large a part of the nation.

Reform of the banking system has been a major objective of the Roosevelt administration as one of the essential elements in the foundations for the new social order. If these reforms achieve their ends, there will be no repetition, in our day, of this year's banking collapse. This is all to the good, but assurances as to the future offer small comfort for those whose funds are frozen in closed banks, and they contribute little toward a solution of the problem immediately on hand—the restoration of buying power, the raising of commodity prices, and the reemployment of the ten or twelve millions or more of workers now without jobs. Therefore, hope is quickened again and confidence reborn in many a household, in the drive launched by the Washington administration to release frozen deposits, to reopen closed banks, and to make good for the American people at least part of the great financial losses suffered in the bank closings and suspensions earlier in the year.

The full power of the federal government has gone into this drive. Approximately 3,500 banks have been closed since January 1, 1933. Red tape was cut to a minimum, as the Roosevelt administration, with its characteristic directness of approach, prepared to deal with the bank problem. Heretofore, when a national bank went into insolvency, dividends were paid to depositors only when corresponding amounts were collected from the borrowers. This involved delay, and often imposed hardships on those who had no funds elsewhere. Now, under instructions of J. F. T. O'Connor, Comptroller of the Currency, receivers immediately make application to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for as great a loan as can safely be made from the frozen securities of the bank. The R. F. C. is therefore the pivotal agency in the government's drive to release frozen deposits, and the R. F. C., with the credit of the American nation back of it, takes in return those assets which are believed to be sound, even though "frozen" and slow paying for the moment. During the period between March 5 and October 7, 1933, as a result of loans from the R. F. C., depositors in closed banks were paid nearly $280,000,000, a mighty reinforcement to national buying power. Thawing out of frozen deposits has given rise to much loose talk. A national bank, for example, fails with reported deposits of $5,000,000. Clearly enough, the receiver has no such sum to pay the anxious depositors; if he had, the institution would never have gone into insolvency. Uncle Sam draws no rabbits out of hats, and in banks whose assets have melted away through speculation in the depositors' money, or bad investments, the best that the federal government can do is to make quickly available to the depositors, by loans from the R. F. C., an amount which represents a conservative appraisal of such assets as have a real value. Yet this, for the depositor, is a notable advance from the period when creditors of insolvent banks had to wait one, two or more years for their initial dividend.

On March 15, 1933, as the bank holiday ended, 4,518 national banks in the United States were licensed and reopened for business. On March 16, 1933, there were still 1,446 national banks unlicensed, most of them in the hands of conservators or receivers. Banks in this group are being reopened on completion of a plan of reorganization for each, satisfactory to the Comptroller of the Currency. By October 10 the number of unlicensed banks had been reduced to 736, with frozen

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deposits of $633,530,000 and unrestricted deposits of $47,705,000. Since that date, steady progress has been made on the reorganization plans of banks in the unlicensed group. Washington officials hope by the first of the year to complete the reorganization of practically all the banks in the unlicensed group, thus permitting the release of the funds still tied up therein. A reorganization plan usually calls for an agreement by the depositors to surrender part of their deposits, and a provision for the raising of new capital. In the case of the individual bank, much depends on the ability of the depositors, stockholders and other parties interested to reach an agreement satisfactory to the Comptroller.

Late in October, President Roosevelt broadened the scope of the drive to include state banks, with the distribution to depositors of $1,000,000,000 as the immediate objective. He explained:

> The thawing out of frozen deposits will put money in the hands of thousands who desperately need that money to live on, and it will restore working capital and credit to business men and farmers all over the country. This drive to distribute frozen deposits is one of the major steps of the recovery program. I count on the cooperation of everyone concerned to get this job done and done quickly.

Headed by C. B. Merriam of Topeka, a member of the R. F. C., a Deposit Liquidation Board has been established to free $1,000,000,000 of the $2,000,000,000 in closed banks. President Roosevelt says:

> The purpose of this board will be to stimulate and encourage liquidating agents of banks closed after January 1, 1933, to borrow from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in order that funds may be made available to depositors as quickly as possible.

In general, loans will be made for the benefit of depositors up to a maximum of 50 percent of their deposits, including distributions already made. Distribution may be above, or below, 50 percent, in individual banks, depending on the nature of the assets. The new agency will face few complications in dealing with national banks, inasmuch as the federal government is invested with direct authority over them. It may encounter more serious difficulties in its dealings with state banks, because of the wide divergence in state laws, and because court action may be necessary to discharge the receivers now in charge of some of the state banks. The R. F. C. has about $800,000,000 available for taking over the assets of closed banks, 3,500 in number, and this amount will be nearly sufficient to meet the demands of the President's liquidation plan. Some 1,750 of the 3,500 closed banks have already borrowed from the R. F. C. Release of $1,000,000,000 in the next six months, or an amount anywhere near $1,000,000,000, will give national purchasing power a substantial boost, and psychologically, should have an effect hardly less important.

The federal government will not stop here, with the release of $1,000,000,000 of frozen deposits. It will shortly blaze a new trail in our financial history by the insurance of bank deposits, under authority of legislation passed by the last Congress. This is not the place to appraise the merits of the new experiment, the wisdom of which was sharply challenged by conservatives in the last session of Congress who pointed out that sound bankers would have to underwrite the mistakes of the reckless. What is important to bear in mind is that the insurance provision of the Glass-Steagall bill was put into the law in response to a popular cry for protection, a cry for protection from the many thousands who had lost their savings in the collapse of existing safeguards to the banking system of the country. As Comptroller O'Connor happily phrased it:

> Their cry for protection was met, and whether popular or unpopular with the individual banker, it is now the law. The American people want assurance that, when they put their life savings into a bank, they can be assured of the safety of such funds.

The United States Treasury will furnish the initial capital for the Federal Deposit Corporation, in the amount of $150,000,000. In addition, Federal Reserve Banks will subscribe one-half of their surplus, about $140,000,000 more, and another $200,000,000 will be subscribed by those banks that become members of the Permanent Insurance Fund. The corporation will thus be assured of a capital fund of about $500,000,000, and the law gives it authority to borrow against its assets to an amount three times its capital. State banks, not members of the Federal Reserve System, more than 8,000 in all, are eligible, if they can qualify—the qualifications being that assets of a bank applying for membership be adequate to enable it to meet all its liabilities to its depositors and other creditors. Temporary insurance goes into effect on January 1, to a maximum amount of $2,500 each until July 1, 1934, when deposits up to $10,000 will be insured 100 percent, those between $10,000 and $50,000, 75 percent, and those above $50,000, 50 percent. Examinations of non-Federal Reserve banks will be based on "solvency" rather than liquidity. At the present writing, nearly 3,000 non-Federal Reserve state banks have applied for membership in the Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the applications are still pouring in.

Adequate capital is necessary to keep banks in continued operation, and here again the federal government will extend a helping hand. For an efficiently working banking system is essential to the recovery of business and agriculture. Once

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the country returns to a normal economic level, it should be easy enough for banks to secure adequate capital, but during the present emergency many banks have been unable to do so. The necessary capital will be provided through the purchase by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation of preferred stock. Said President Roosevelt:

> To accept the government's offer to purchase preferred stock does not mean that a bank is weak but that it is eager to cooperate in the recovery effort to the fullest possible extent, and thus undertake to put this additional capital to work. We are not thinking of idle capital. We are thinking of working capital —capital working for recovery.

Salvaging depositors' dollars is therefore but a part of the story. The federal government has set about the creation of a new banking system, on foundations which it is hoped will be far stronger than those which have proved so inadequate in supporting the old system in a period of financial stress. As the day of "rugged individualism" passes, the Roosevelt administration has moved to establish governmental control not only over industry, business and the use of private capital, but also over private banking operations. A fundamental change is taking place in the relations between the government and the banks. Through the insurance of deposits, the purchase of preferred stock, and the reorganization plans under which licenses have been given to reopen many national banks, federal supervision over banking activities will henceforth cover a wide range, far wider than that of the old order. Many bankers have opposed the new controls, and many have criticized the deposit insurance plan. This was to be expected, inasmuch as federal regulation will tend at least in its early phases, to prevent large profits. The Roosevelt administration seems definitely committed to a policy that will curb speculation in the stock and grain exchanges, give investors a reasonable measure of protection, and assure for the depositors, the safety of the money they place in banks—all to the end that the country be spared a repetition of the 1933 banking debacle.

In creating the new banking system, and framing the federal control program, President Roosevelt and his administration have acted in response to a widespread popular demand for a safer banking system, and for a reasonable measure of protection for the average investor. The developments before the Senate committee investigating banks and bankers will strengthen Mr. Roosevelt's hand in his determination to put through his sweeping reforms. The day of *laissez-faire* has run its course and the pendulum has swung in the other direction, to federal control, to prevent a recurrence of the abuses in part responsible for the depression. President Roosevelt proposes to place a check on destructive speculation, to limit the "free use" of money, and control the use of private capital. This policy, now being unfolded in Washington, is one of fundamental importance in the evolution of American society. In this plan, the new banking system occupies a central place.

WHAT IS PLAIN CHANT?

By VINCENT C. DONOVAN

THIS question is in the air because of the movement today back to the full beauty of the liturgy. The query comes chiefly from those for whom the liturgy should be the integrating force of their education, as the chant is of the liturgy itself: Catholic college students and graduates. Many non-Catholics love the chant; others look on it as an interesting antique; but all the non-Catholic musicians of my experience appreciate the value of the chant both as music and as a part of public worship. Unfortunately for the fulfilment of the law of the Church, this is not true of our Catholics, notably not of Catholic church musicians. Sometimes they seek knowledge of the chant sincerely. But most often it is a purely rhetorical question, even tinged with both scepticism and cynicism.

The chant, the tone of the query implies, can have no possible place in worship today; the inference is that it belongs to the so-called Dark Ages. The ideal which the law of the Church holds up for us in this matter, of the congregation again singing the chant as in the early Church and Middle Ages, is interesting but not practicable. For popular singing, melody is essential, and the chant certainly is not melodious; it is too plain. It is, moreover, too difficult as to rotation, theory and interpretation. It might be all right for a monastic choir or the exceptional chancel choir, but the chant is not plain enough for the people. This inconsistency was deliciously epitomized by an old English lady who anathematized the chant briefly by saying: "I do like a bit of *music* in church!"

Such an attitude, the common one, toward the chant errs in two fundamentals—the purpose of music in church, and the nature of Gregorian music. While music is used by the Church in worship as an emotional stimulus, that is only a psychological means to a wholly spiritual end. Music

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is not meant as a condiment to worship; it is not a spice for mere emotional delight. It is an aid to spiritual digestion and consequent moral vigor. Not only is it a means of contact but of union with the Object of worship. It translates material elements into spiritual terms. Those terms gradually become comprehensible; we gain insight into spiritual truths. That vision warms and energizes, moving us out of the narrow confines of self up to the expansiveness of the Personal Deity. It becomes a colloquy in which the soul praises God, and He in turn lifts us up to the understanding, strength and peace of the eternal verities. In short, the purpose of music in worship is not entertainment or accompaniment but a conversation of praise, petition and love with God.

Canon Gontier, whose "Reasoned Method of Plain Chant" sowed the seed of the modern restoration of the chant by the Benedictines of Solesmes, said in that book:

> Plain chant is a veritable language, which can no more be understood with the aid of a method than a living language can be understood with the aid of a grammar and a dictionary. The most a method does is to lead to an unintelligent spelling or a defective pronunciation. It is necessary to live with those who speak this language to speak it correctly, to understand in it and express in it every nuance and delicacy.

The present Holy Father confirmed this idea in 1924 in a letter to the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, commending him both for founding a Gregorian Institute, and for calling to teach there the Fathers of Solesmes, "who have striven, with so much care, to restore Gregorian chant in its primitive beauty, and who, by reason of their perfect competence, interpret this kind of music with an elegance and an art which leave nothing to be desired." Pius XI, in the same letter, referred to the chant "as the language of the liturgy."

There is the key to the appreciation of plain chant. It is primarily and essentially a language of prayer in the Roman Catholic Church. Judging it as such, we come fully to realize why music is the language of the soul. We know from philosophy that the soul is spiritual because it is simple. A music or a language which is spiritual must, therefore, be simple. The simple, since it lacks parts, is clear and direct. Here we have the principle of all art, selection, which is only simplicity applied to esthetics. This is why Gregorian chant is an art of a high order, because it is simple, natural and direct. It is a plain language for plain people. Canon Gontier substantiated this when he wrote:

> Plain chant is the sung prayer of the people; its text is prose; its movement, recitation; its prosody, popular accentuation; its tonality, the tonality of the people, the natural scale of sounds.

Much could be, and has been, written on each of these points. To understand them is to comprehend the chant. We shall then no longer do it the injustice of judging it from the point of view of a worldly life or a pagan art, nor even from the vantage point of music itself. It goes even beyond the mystic sphere of music, because it is prayer.

The words of that prayer are the inspired formulae of Holy Writ. But words are limitations as well as expressions of thought. The music which is plain chant carries us beyond these limitations. Music as such is capable of carrying us to the frontiers of the spirit. Gregorian chant is a passport viséd by the Church to admit us into the very realms of the spirit itself. It praises God, and talks to Him in beautiful Latin prose of poetic content, not in the measured steps of verse, but with the natural freedom of the rhythm of life. This rhythm is the rhythm of speech, particularly of classical Roman oratory. The equality of duration of the individual elements gives a smoothness and tranquillity not to be found in the measured and syncopated beats of modern song. There is a sweep of phrase like the undulation of the sea, because in the chant we sing not words or notes but ideas.

These are clarified and emphasized through the principle of accentuation. We can easily understand the simplicity of this through what we do daily in conversation: we make important ideas stand out. When a hero or prominent person, someone who stands out from the rabble, is hoisted to our shoulders, we are acting on the principle of accentuation. It is emphasis through height rather than force, melody rather than dynamics. The chant, by means of a melodic, rhythmic and dynamic surge flowing from the text itself, thus elevates an idea for our contemplation. This it does with melodies which are frequently fascinating, and always intelligent because springing spontaneously from the text. The delicate nuances of these melodies are what carry us beyond not only the meaning of the word but even beyond its connotation.

It is a revealing and warming light, chastened by the pure scale of nature. From primitive times the people have spontaneously expressed their sorrows and their joys in some form or other of this diatonic scale. The Chinese, the Greeks and the Irish are notable examples. They found solace, inspiration and courage in nature's arrangement of sounds. The conversion of an Augustine and the glories of the Middle Ages are instances of the power the Church's adaptation of this scale has had. By using it the chromatics of the modern scale or of primitive emotions are restrained from clouding the vision of Truth, or weakening its influx of moral courage. Certainly this chastity of expression is the object of lan-

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guage, and a characteristic of art. Clarity, Saint Thomas says, is the keynote of beauty. The chant, in its simple directness of utterance, clarifies the matter of prayer for us, and also the minds and hearts which respond to its accents.

The perfect exemplification of this is in the church of the monks of Solesmes. By contrast with the chant as sung in mostly every place else, there the secret of the chant's beauty and the reason why it is the official music prayer of the Church are clearly evident. There is no ridiculous attempt to modernize and so distort the chant. There is no vulgar dramatizing or sickly sentimentalizing of the text. Profound sentiment is there, but no anemic sentimentality. The drama of life is there in all the power of the simple relationship of the soul with God. There is no "playing to the galleries," but such manifest absorption in the praises of God that the peace which is the point of the Spirit of Love penetrates to the spirits of those who in any way participate in this joy of song. It is contemplation—the contemplation of Truth through beauty.

Pope Pius X said in 1912 that "in reestablishing Gregorian chant, we propose to make our people chant on beauty." The beauty of simplicity, which is the characteristic note of the chant at Solesmes, makes one realize what Saint Teresa meant when she said prayer is merely conversing with God as with a friend one truly loves. It isn't necessary to strike attitudes; sincerity has no need of affectations.

If we can judge from the vacuous strivings of all the arts in our day, the falsities of our pleasures, and the social crisis the world is in as a result of converting means into ends, there can be no doubt but that we have become so superficial that sincerity itself means to us a pose. Even in worship we too often have merely external postures of reverence without the internal elevation of mind and heart which *is* prayer. This is why I fear the prejudice against plain chant is less musical than it is religious. The fact that even in worship we are seeking self rather than God proves that we have forgotten how to pray. We aren't used to talking to God, certainly not as a communal unit.

The world today is becoming more and more conscious of the need of uniting as a community of brothers in God. To achieve this we need unity of ideas. Only a simple, common language can effect the commerce of those ideas. Is not plain chant an ideal one to effect a world transformation? Its very monody, its purely melodic nature, which "plain chant" really means, is both a symbol of and a means to unity. The structure of all its melodies, which sometimes flower like a Gothic cathedral, is based on the four simple cadences which comprise the *cursus* of classical oratory. The *cursus* was only a means of making pleasing cadences, that is of the accentuation of the idea of the phrase through a modulation of the voice at the end of it. This was achieved by endings easily learned and adaptable to all texts. The eight tones or scales, in one of which each cadence was written, reflect every human emotion, yet in their purity and simplicity are also a means of unity. Rhythm clinches all these means. And since the chant rhythm is the rhythm of dignified and refined speech, our problem thus seems solved in theory.

In practise we need to unite again as the human race in the common and active tongue of the contemplation and praise of God. The world is looking for a way to readjustment today. Religion literally means that, but readjustment to right principles. The chant's purpose is to nourish us with those principles. But so long as it remains a foreign language even to those who have it by right of heritage and law as a mother tongue, Babel will continue to exist. If the world crisis beget any wisdom, however, we shall begin to appreciate the Church's traditional way of life, the liturgy, and learn to love and speak its language. That is the language, one of the pioneers in the modern Gregorian restoration reminded us, that all the people of an earlier age flocked to take. "For," he said, "Gregorian chant is definitely a language, the chanted language of prayer and Divine praise, the language of heaven which we are rendering."

Conquest

"My mind to me a kingdom is."
Well speaks the poet so.
Therein a reign more absolute
I keep than monarchs know.
Therein, unless I speak the word,
Not even God can go.

He layeth siege unto my soul;
His love is fierce and strong.
But I, pride-guarded, speak Him nay;
His love is patient, long.
Behind the spear points of my thoughts
My heart hath heard His song.

My heart is traitor; I am His;
He ruleth in my stead.
Now walk I at His chariot wheel
And clamor to be dead?
Now go I clothed in slave-worn stuff
With cypress on my head?

Not such His conquest. Wins He all,
Yet all He gives to me.
And now my kingdom richer is
And I, its queen, more free
Since I am slave to God alone
And He is Slave to me.

CATHERINE READY.

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CENTURIES OF THE "JUST PRICE"

By PAUL ERNEST ANDERSON

IT IS no exaggeration to say that the state of culture and religion depends to a great extent upon the right use of the medium of exchange. No era of history stands out in more compelling relief as to social achievements, as to individual, spiritual attainments and growth, and as to the maintenance of an extraordinarily high level of education and general prosperity than those years between 1150 and 1350, the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. It is the period of the universities and the building of the great cathedrals, the age of religious renaissance, unique in all history, the height of the glory of Catholicism. And during that age there was inaugurated the "just price," as the direct outgrowth of a non-usurious money. This last was due to Archbishop Wichmann of Madgeburg (1150-1192), who changed the money system in a simple way, and brought about astounding results on humanity itself. Fully understood, this change enables us to understand how the peoples of Europe were suddenly able, without the use of machinery, without tremendous capital resources, with nothing but their own labors and ingenuity, to construct the scores of great cathedrals which are the precious heritage of the world, to dot the hillsides of dozens of countries with castles, to build systems of roads and canals, and to fill the rivers with an enormous and growing traffic, and finally to lay the foundations of hundreds of the cities of present-day Europe.

Archbishop Wichmann, a clerical prince, had, as did the secular princes also, the right to coin money for his own followers or subjects. In the year 1150, needing money for an empty treasury, and being loath to tax his subjects, he decreed, after considerable thought, that all outstanding coins must be withdrawn twice annually, and be recoined at a minting fee of 30 percent per annum. Though there was naturally a great outcry against this decree, principally from the usurers, it proved to be successful, so successful, indeed, that princes both clerical and religious all over Europe began to follow his example. They reissued coins of thin silver plate, called dinares, or thin pennies. Each of these coins was divided so that it could be broken to make small change in trade. Later the coins came to be known as bracteats, and their use spread from Poland to Italy, and throughout western Europe. Generally speaking, the average reminting fee was fixed at from 20 to 25 percent annually and bracteats became as a result the only money used in western Europe from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries.

What was the startling result of this depreciation of the money? First, it immediately affected all hoarding. Anyone who hoarded coin or money lost it entirely at the end of a year. Every possessor of money was thus forced to put out his money at a constantly lowering rate of interest because money was suddenly plentiful and easy to get; competition for money reduced interest rates. Money being abundant, interest finally disappeared!

Naturally, every money owner tried to get rid of his money before minting time, exchanging it for wares or lending it to be used for capital production to escape payment of the depreciation charges at the mint. The money thus passed from hand to hand at a great and increasing velocity of circulation, setting up an unparalleled rise of demand for goods of all kinds. So great was the demand for goods that production facilities are said to have trebled in fifteen years! Production and distribution went on to the limits of human abilities and intensities, and within one single generation after Archbishop Wichmann made his cunning innovation in the money system, poverty disappeared from all of western Europe, and wealth became almost universal. The darkness of the previous ages gave way to the light of leisure and increasing culture and spirituality.

Even this simple device of depreciating the money might not have worked such singular results had there not been made two additional provisions. All debts contracted between individuals and companies were to be paid back in the agreed amount and value of the loan as of the day of contracting. If a man lent another man 100 dinares, his debt had to be fully repaid in like value; hence, although no interest was charged in the contracting of debts, the creditor received full value in return, dinare for dinare, penny for penny. Savings therefore took the form of investing money, of lending money for various constructive purposes without interest charges. Money so lent for the production of goods not only made the people richer in proportion but also distributed it more widely, as most labor then was performed by individuals and not by machines. The modern may think that the lending of money to be repaid in full value at a later date and without interest was merely nominal, and that fluctuations in money from time to time destroy the possibility of repayment in like value as of the day and date of the loan. But the Church insisted upon this feature strictly. And the modern man may ask, scepticalally, how this was done, this problem of repaying debts equitably, which even now baffles the experts of the modern world.

The answer is through the inauguration of the "just price." The just price of the enlightened

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age was not a fixed price; nor was it price-fixing in any sense of the term. The just price arose automatically, being achieved through the depreciation of the coinage, and as the coin depreciated on an average of 25 percent per year, the price calculus was adjusted to this fact quite automatically by sliding prices. A bolt of wool, let us say, cost at the beginning of a certain year 12 dinares; three months later it would cost 13 dinares; at the end of six months it would cost 14 dinares; after nine months, 15; and at the end of the same year, 16 dinares. As at the end of a year all holders of money had to turn in their coin to be reminted, turning in, say, 16 dinares, for instance, and receiving back 12 dinares in exchange, a new level of prices was really inaugurated each year, and adjusted to the money in circulation. The system of money and prices was flexible, but the just price enabled people to maintain a constantly adjustable level of prices held at the peak of production and consumption in even balance. Although the monetary notations of prices changed in any given year, the actual amount of money commanded in prices remained stable at all times. This achievement may well be termed stabilization at the point of full consumption and full employment of the population. In short, free demand for goods in the market, where money was under the same compulsion to enter into the market as goods were, determined prices at the cost of labor plus materials. Overhead costs, as we know them, largely usury charges, simple and compounded, drawn off as debt against industry from incomes, disappeared entirely. On the other hand, offsetting these, wages and incomes rose in the same proportion. In short, labor and material finally became the only costs, and rapid circulation made available plenty of capital, which was distributed eventually almost wholly as incomes.

The late Professor J. Thorwald Rogers estimated that the artizans of London drew weekly wages which would equal $35-$50 today. Maier-Schirmeyer and Dr. France, German scholars, bear out this testimony of the unparalleled prosperity between 1150-1350 in western Europe. Austria, Germany, England, France, Spain, Poland, Switzerland and Italy were all affected by the twin facts of depreciating money and just price calculations. The construction of beautiful monuments in such widely distant places as Mont St. Michel, Wurzburg, Salisbury and Cologne show the diffused prosperity of this period. Prominent artists of known skill were employed. Workmen reached a status of independence and worked only four days a week. Education was sought after so widely by all classes that educational facilities were taxed, and the Church was founding new institutions of all sorts as rapidly as possible. Money was abundant and available for such purposes.

A chronicler of the period writes that the low people, principally workers and peasants, rarely ate less than four courses at meals, that food was abundant and varied, and the quality high. The journeymen and apprentices boarding with masters were legally protected by ordinances as to quantity and quality and kind of food served as well as wages. The towns and new cities wanted to attract workmen and keep them satisfied with conditions. Clothes and stuffs for all classes were made of the most durable materials, and the making of dyes to produce a long-continued luster became a fine and rare art. Quality offset quantity, as time went on, and all classes had not only immediate necessities but simple luxuries. The whole of society lived in luxury incredible to modern men, where poverty is often inclusive of more than 80 percent of a nation. Homes were richly furnished, often elaborately, with goods the value of which today runs into staggering figures as collectors' items. Even the peasants wore gold and silver buttons in double rows on both coats and vests, while their shoes were ornamented with silver buckles and made of the finest and most exquisitely treated and durable leather. So general was prosperity that the distinctions between classes, between noblemen and peasants, between artizans and masters, almost entirely disappeared.

The love of fine craftsmanship and artistic expression dates back to this age, too. When quality goods became the rule, designers and artists of all kinds were encouraged to develop their ideas and apply them. A premium for artistic work was everywhere commanded, and the general level of quality as well as skill rose rapidly, spreading widely among all members of society, and reaching an embodiment for all time in the work of the thousands of nameless artizans who decorated and adorned hundreds of cathedrals, public buildings and other structures throughout western Europe!

It was also an era of the greatest cultural achievement. It was the age of folk-lore and folk-song and beautiful folk dances. It marked the beginning of chivalry, when women, no longer forced by poverty to compete with men, found their true rank in society as ladies, as mothers, as social adornments, and as refiners of manners and love. Our modern ideas of manners and social behavior are but dim reflections of this glorious age. Man, at last free from the delusion of money, from its curse, allowed to pursue the dreams of humanity, and to live a life of cultivated leisure, no longer feared economic insecurity. He had conquered it. And released, he set forth on the adventure of the soul.

Will the world ever see another such age? Will it ever see man free from the curse of money, from the misuse of it as usury? I think I can hear the voice of Archbishop Wichmann ringing down through the ages, "Change the money system, and you have changed man!"

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ABBÉ HENRI BREMOND

By ERNEST DIMNET

SEVEN weeks ago a French priest was being buried at Aix-en-Provence, and the funeral was a startling ceremony. It was conducted by the Archbishop of Aix himself, while the French government was officially represented, the French Academy had delegated its most illustrious member, M. Paul Valéry, and an actual descendent of Saint Louis, Prince Sixte de Bourbon, was present. This was not all. I do not think that, since the death of Anatole France, the press had taken so much notice of any writer's disappearance. For weeks, not only the literary or religious reviews but many dailies devoted columns to articles on Abbé Bremond or to the recollections of men who had known him personally. And now that this concert is gradually subsiding, there remains the consciousness, in the mind of the French nation, that a great, noble and irreplaceable influence is no longer among us.

Henri Bremond was born in 1865 at Aix-en-Provence. His forebears had been lawyers, but he, breaking the tradition, at the age of eighteen, rather impulsively, joined the Society of Jesus. He was sent to Wales to go through his philosophical and theological studies, and stayed there ten years. Nobody could approach Abbé Bremond without realizing how much influence his English contacts had exercised upon him. Like many Frenchmen inclined to think that you catch a language rather than learn it, he never bothered about the subtleties of English pronunciation, but few people enjoyed the innumerable nuances of the English vocabulary as he did, and he could quote from the most unexpected English sources. During his last illness it was English that came naturally to his lips.

When he was given a degree by the University of Oxford, he prepared an address of thanks which he asked me to translate into English for him. Most of it was devoted to charmingly human reminiscences of his ten years in Wales. The representative of the university who was welcoming him naturally took much notice of his interest in English literature. "Nostrarum camoenarum amor," he said in simple though exquisite Latin. But Bremond's own pages were full of minor details which his caressing sentences made touching or humorous. Considerable importance was attached to his friendship with the family of a humble artizan, a Dissenter, whom he used to visit on holidays.

Clearly that period of Bremond's life had molded his intellect in a special way and had given him a peculiar outlook on life. The curious admixture in the British of freedom and conservativeness, their natural simplicity and sincerity and aversion to conventionalities, the independence of even their religious life, had left their imprint upon him. He never showed the usual characteristics of the French Jesuit. More than by anything else, he had been influenced by his reading of Newman and by his friendship with George Tyrrell, himself a Jesuit student in a nearby house of studies. He had to pay for his attachment to both men, but he was also well repaid for it.

After teaching philosophy during a few years in various schools of the Society in France, Henri Bremond was sent to Paris on the staff of the *Études Religieuses,* the well-known monthly of the Jesuits in France. It was no surprise to him or to his fellow religious. From his very first year in Wales, when the originality of his thought and expression delighted his professor of literature, it had been taken for granted that he would be a *père ecrivain.* His success with the readers of the *Études* was immediate and created more than a ripple. The new contributor did not write in the least like his *confrères,* who are always a little more inclined to austere solidity than to the more literary qualities.

Henri Bremond refused to think of any artificial standard when he wrote. Even then it seemed natural to him to get into the innermost recesses of his soul and exhibit his interior reaction without any self-consciousness. The readers of the old review were charmed. I was one of them. I did not know Bremond then, but I was pursuing identically the same studies. An article on Newman's "Sermons," of which I would have liked to have written every line, simply compelled me to write to him and that was the beginning of a correspondence which continued uninterruptedly during thirty-odd years.

However, I did not actually meet him for two more years. I was making my début as an English writer with unsigned letters to the London *Pilot,* which Bremond apparently enjoyed. The day I first called on him at an apartment on the Avenue de Villars, the servant brought in the *Pilot* as we were talking. "You like those letters, of course," Bremond said. I demurred and made a few well-founded criticisms. "Oh! own up," he said.

Long after his secession from the Society, Bremond admitted many times that his superiors had been more than kind to him. They sent him to Athens under pretence of a not very strenuous Lenten series, and they let him go to London where Baron von Hügel and Mrs. Meynell lionized him a little more than was good for him. Tyrrell was also at the Mount Street Jesuits' house

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then, and his difficulties had begun. Bremond was loyal to his friend and, in spite of his happy smile, he rather enjoyed a fight. Superiors were alarmed at the conjunction of two dangerous talents, and in the spring of 1904 it seemed advisable on all sides that Bremond should leave the Society. He went back to Paris.

I found him at a small *hotel des Americains* — long since demolished — counting sack-clothy French Jesuits' shirts. He was smiling as usual. He had just received a letter from the Archbishop of Aix welcoming him into his diocese but leaving him full liberty to go on in Paris with his literary work. Also, in spite of rare impracticality this lawyer's son had some notion that he had private means. In a few weeks he was writing again—books this time—on Newman, on Fenelon, on unknown if highly interesting Provençal saints, and his success was the same as before.

The only real unpleasantness came in 1908 when Tyrrell died and Bremond, without asking a permission which the Bishop of Southwark would have refused, said a few prayers over his grave. During several months he was deprived of his *celebret* and it was not till two or three years later that a sort of cloud hanging over him gradually lifted. Powerful friends in the Church and in society helped in clearing the sky, but what helped the most was on the part of Henri Bremond himself a display of literary activity and talent which could not but command admiration. It is remarkable that the most independent, one might say the most oversensitive of French writers, Maurice Barrès, a man who resented even the appearance of a possibility to feel any influence, delighted in constant intercourse with Bremond.

During the war, Abbé Bremond began work on what will certainly remain as a monument of psychological acumen as well as erudition, the eleven volumes of his unfinished "Literary History of Religious Sentiment in France." When he brought his first volume to me and said he was planning at least five or six more, I glanced at the contents and prophesied that before the fifth volume was completed the author would be in the French Academy. I was not mistaken. Long before Abbé Duchesne died people felt that Bremond alone could be given his *fauteuil*. I was only moderately surprised when I found one day his first five volumes on the desk of such a discerning but also such an unlikely reader as Jean Giraudoux, the playwright. "Another Sainte-Beuve," he said, and this in fact was what everybody felt.

The paradox of France is that the same country can produce atheists who have been a little too much advertised and saints who have not received enough attention except when their number startles even casual readers of the lists of canonizations (as in a recent issue of the *Times*). France every now and then expels monks and nuns, but she goes on producing them in great numbers and of exceptional quality. ("The Catholic Directory of America" will show that half the religious orders in the United States were originally French, and no city produces as many religious vocations as Paris does.) This fact shows that, alongside of a political element which commands little respect, there is in France a vast mass of Catholics who not only obey the decalogue, but are impelled irresistibly to follow the evangelical counsels. This has been the fact for many centuries and it is the history of that great religious past that Bremond was dealing with. My friend, Professor Albert Guerard, says that, unknown to himself, even a French Freemason is a Catholic at heart. Certainly the success of Henri Bremond's volumes in unexpected circles demonstrated that religious psychology still retains its attraction for the general public in France.

It must be admitted that Bremond's unique literary gifts helped powerfully the subject matter he was handling. His erudition was a marvel to me who, in the ten years during which we divided an apartment in Paris, never saw him use a memorandum; his range and rapidity of illustration were equally fascinating. He had sincerity, a sincerity that kept him miles away from the ordinary canons of hagiography; a perfectly orthodox but deeply human outlook on spiritual manifestations; a keen interest in the personal characteristics of saints; a love for their friends and a fearless antagonism to their enemies or ill-advised admirers; he had humor and not infrequently drollery; he had feeling and poetry; and finally he had an artist's respect for the language and a rare mastery of rhythm. Few writers have been so richly equipped.

It is a tradition of the French clergy that priests —not only those with a university degree employed in teaching but even parish clergy and bishops—write and publish books. Until the French Revolution disturbed everything in Church and State, frequently more than half of the forty members of the French Academy were churchmen. Laymen not only are not surprised at priests being literary, but they would be puzzled and grieved if they ceased to be. Culture rather than popularity is the real link between the secular world and the clergy of France, and it is a powerful one. I have never met a single Frenchman, practising Catholic or not, who was not aware of what the Church of France owed to the eloquence of a Lacordaire, the refinement of a Dupanloup, or the scholarship of an Abbé Duchesne. Bremond did the same service to French Catholicism, and his volumes may prolong, during a generation or more, the influence which his place in literature had secured for him. May those books kindle noble ambitions and guide —by their few faults as well as by their admirable qualities—many imitators.

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KEEPING THE RECORD

By EUGENE P. MURPHY

MUCH of the West that was is lost and can never be retrieved. Monuments and books have saved a great deal for us, but not enough by far. Therefore when a new document comes to hand, it is heartily welcomed. Yet in all these written accounts it is the viewpoint that matters. The army man, the adventurer, the miner, each colors the story with his own bias. The Indians, of course, are mute. They did not and do not write. One witness alone can be relied upon to view the great spectacle of frontier life and "see it whole": the missionary, priest or nun. The journals of the Spanish padres and the French Jesuits are ample proof of this as far as our continent is concerned.

When a nun writes the record, which unfortunately is all too seldom, she inserts therein that same delicacy of manner and supernatural outlook that made her presence in the new country as a breath of heaven in an atmosphere laden with human greed and brutality. The pioneer nun is a figure as worthy of commemoration in lasting bronze as the plainsmen and scouts grouped together in the Denver Civic Center, or the "Pioneer Mother" whose strong loveliness is an inspiration to the residents of Kansas City. True she was not as conspicuous. But that she was a powerful, God-bringing influence, the men who drove through the railroads, built the towns and dug open the mountains will bear willing testimony. The primitive hospitals and the institutions for children and outcasts conducted by the Sisters brought Christ nearer to thousands of souls that needed Him badly.

Out in the Southwest territory, from 1872 to 1892, under the jurisdiction of the saintly Archbishop Lamy, there lived and worked a daughter of Mother Seton, Sister Blandina Segale. During these twenty years, every day of which was crammed with real adventure, she kept a journal for the benefit of her sister, likewise a Sister of Charity. Now six years after the appearance of Willa Cather's "Death Comes for the Archbishop," this diary, "The End of the Santa Fe Trail," is given to us in published form. I find the drama more stirring as the nun constructs it. Her narrative, though less artful, is more gripping. The dramatis personae are in part the same: Archbishop Lamy, Bishop Machebeuf, the Chavez, the Penitentes, Kit Carson, and the Sisters of Loretto. In greater part they are different, added characters being Billy the Kid, General Lew Wallace, the Jesuits; Gasparri, Fede, Marra, Persone, and Pinto, all driven from Italy by Garibaldi; Ingersoll the atheist, Geronimo the Apache, the Sisters of Charity, and others.

Though human life was almost as cheap in that hinterland as it is today in our cities, there was an element of chivalry in the desperadoes and a certain uprightness in the Indians that make any comparison of them with the ratty murderers we know entirely unfair. Billy the Kid was an outlaw whose name cast terror along the Santa Fe trail for many a year. What our grandfathers and fathers have told us, and what the penny-dreadfuls of our youth supplied, give this terrorist a character that is completely savage. However he was not that. Young and of striking appearance, as were most of his confederates, he had many traits which compelled admiration. Sister Blandina saw the unrealized possibilities for good that lay within his untamed soul. Like a true teaching nun she wondered what the result might have been had some good influence reached him in time. Could it not have stilled the hate rising in the heart of the lad of twelve and prevented him from starting on his career of killing?

How this religious woman became acquainted with the notorious bandit is an interesting story. In an adobe hut on the outskirts of Trinidad, Colorado, one of the gang took refuge after being badly wounded in a gun fight with a comrade. For five months the Sister of Charity and her companions visited and cared for him until the arrival of his mother, a few days before his death. The sentiment of the citizens was, "Let the desperado die." Billy determined to avenge himself on them by scalping the four doctors of the town. His gratitude for the kindness shown his pal by the Sisters was deep and sincere. Meeting Sister Blandina on one of her frequent errands of mercy to the hut he offered to grant her any favor she should ask of him. The plea she made was for complete immunity from harm for all the physicians whom the gang had determined to murder. The Kid acquiesced to her request.

His reverence for the Sisterhoods displayed itself on many occasions. Toward the close of his career he lay manacled and chained to the floor of the jail in Santa Fe. He had attempted to slay General Lew Wallace. Sister visited him.

"When I got into the prison cell," she writes, "and Billy saw me, he said, as though we had met yesterday instead of four years ago, 'I wish I could place a chair for you, Sister. Do what you can for Kelly. This is his first offense and he was not himself when he did it. I'll get out of this all right. You will see, Sister.'

"Think, dear Sister Justina, how many crimes might have been prevented had someone had influence over Billy after his first murder. The plains are broad. His ascendency was instantaneous over the minds of our free-lance cowboys who are spurred on by a freedom that is not freedom. Finding himself captain and dictator with no religious principles to check him, he became what he is—greatest murderer of the Southwest. I marvel at the assurance of the chained youth. No one can surmise how he can escape punishment this time."

Still he did, but not for long. Today William H. Bonney lies buried on the site of old Fort Sumner, New Mexico. At his side are two comrades of the gang, Charlie Bowdrie and Tom O'Falliord. Old friends and others fascinated by the memory of the slightly built, boy-faced Robin Hood of the plains have built a marker round his grave. It indicates almost the exact spot where Sheriff Pat Garret shot him to death, July 14, 1881. Nearby are extensive orchards and well-irrigated fields and beautiful farmhouses surrounded by trees and flowers. Peace prevails where the Kid knew only bloody strife.

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This journal contains one description of a caravan slowly working its way from St. Louis to Santa Fe, which shows forth as clearly as any other written record the contribution of Catholic priests and religious women to the winning of the West. Sister Blandina tells of the hardships of the pioneers who immediately preceded her. In the spring of 1867 Bishop Lamy, together with twenty-six helpers whom he had recruited in Europe, three Sisters of Loretto and two Sisters of Charity, set out from St. Louis for Leavenworth. There "the Right Reverend Bishop manned a caravan of about a hundred covered wagons and started on his famous journey along the Santa Fe Trail." The progress of the apostolic company was beset by a peril of which Saint Paul knew nothing—the constant dread of an attack upon them by Indians.

After one visit from a scouting party of Kiowas the Bishop returned to Leavenworth, ordered a detour from the trail, traded all the mules for oxen, and proceeded again on his journey. For nearly a month they continued unmolested until July 30, when "without any apparent reason the Bishop ordered a corral to be made. Every wagon was arranged to form a circle and the oxen were driven inside. The travelers and teamsters ran inside none too soon, for the Kiowa's death whoop preceded the shower of arrows that soon fell on the encampment." The terrible thirst of men and beasts was aggravated by the realization that a stream flowed only a few rods away. Cholera broke out. A young Sister of Loretto and an ox driver died and were buried within the enclosure. The Jesuit, Father Gasparri, was also striken. It was the eve of the feast of Saint Ignatius. He appealed directly to his patron with this very practical prayer: "This is your feast day, dear Saint Ignatius, but you might have treated me better and procured for me a chance to do some work in those arid regions. A fine thing to do for one who desired to do all for Almighty God." He recovered.

The siege was finally lifted when provisions and a barrel of whisky were pushed across the stream to the savages. While these lay in a drunken stupor the wagons moved on and were not further molested. When at length they approached within fifteen miles of Santa Fe they were met by a great cavalcade of native horsemen. It was the feast of Our Lady's Assumption and the walls of the Bishop's adobe cathedral rang with the "Te Deum" that came from the hearts of those grateful wayfarers. The day and the scene takes its place rightfully among the greater events of church history in America.

Miss Cather tells us that in one of those covered wagons the Bishop carefully transported the "dry switches" which were later to be the first fruit trees of his famous garden. Sister Blandina gives a pleasing picture of the prelate *chez-lui:*

"August, 1879. We had a long walk today in the Archbishop's garden. This and the old cathedral are the two objectives of all tourists who come to Santa Fe. The dear old Archbishop showed us a pear tree trained to grow like a grape vine. As His Grace led the way he said, 'Well, my children, shall we visit the fish and the fountain?' The little group (of orphans) answered, 'Please, Archbishop.' "

There were vegetables aplenty in the garden, for "Latour" held a long remembrance of the Christmas dinner prepared for him by "Father Vaillant" when they were still new in the mission field. The salad *sans laitue* was something he had not quite forgotten. On one occasion when the provisions of the hospital, the charity school, and the Sisters' house had utterly given out, Sister Blandina vaulted the episcopal garden wall and threw over enough carrots, turnips, and cabbages to provide for several meals. She then went to make an avowal to His Grace, who granted pardon and proceeded to have the town merchants supply the shortage.

The life of this Sister of Charity was crowded with experiences such as only an untamed land can provide. Hardly arrived at her first station in Trinidad, she saved the father of one of her pupils from lynching by a mob, by inducing the sheriff to march his prisoner through the streets to beg forgiveness of his victim. She accompanied them. The mob relented at the sight of the strange procession and let the law take its course. Later, when the railroads were breaking through the Apache country, the murder of one of the tribe angered the braves to the point of massacre. Sister Blandina went forth alone to convince them that the murderer was not in the construction camp which they had planned to attack. Her care of the sick was greatly appreciated by the builders of the Santa Fe road which had just reached its terminus. Whatever form of charitable or educational work was most needed in Trinidad, Albuquerque and Santa Fe, where she was successively located, found her full of industry and zeal for its accomplishment.

The closing entry in the journal throws light on the perennial school question in this country:

"Summer, 1892. I am to meet the School Board. We met. The intent of the meeting was to notify me that 'under no circumstances does the school board want to lose your services, but we ask you to change your mode of dress.'

"I looked steadily at the Chairman and replied: 'The Constitution of the United States gives me the same privilege to wear this mode of dress as it gives you to wear your trousers. Goodbye.'

"So this is the end of twenty-two years' work in Public School Number One, opened in 1870, when Trinidad was mostly governed by the best shotmen and sheriff's lead, mobs to hang murderers, and jail birds never come to trial, and the life of a man was considered a trifle compared to the possession of a horse. The Jesuits and Sisters used every effort to quell the daily storms, while School Number One exerted an influence over the pupils —grown men and women—that often astonished its teacher."

After these twenty strenuous years a short note from the Mother Superior in Cincinnati brought Sister Blandina back within the pale of civilization, as principal of St. Patrick's School, Pueblo, Colorado. Anyhow, by 1892 the frontier was gone.

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STUDY HALL

By GERALD RAFTERY

THE CHILDREN I teach are from the poorer part of the city. I hesitate to call the section a slum because I have an inherent dislike for the word; it suggests a stew (which is highly edible but hardly habitable). Nevertheless, I often envy those youngsters.

Of course it is almost natural to envy children; they have so many things that we have lost. Their cheeriness and health and curiosity of all things are so strong that even contact with them can inspire us with some of their qualities. But mostly I envy one particular and specialized thing.

Often as I watch a class that had been tearing the playground to pieces ten minutes before and now has immersed itself deeply in its books, I think of it. There can be no more marvelous thing than to read with a new mind all the tales that are old to you and me. To read them from the sort of viewpoint that these children have must be doubly splendid. It is no wonder that they sit motionless and staring, moving only to turn a page.

They are, for the most part, of foreign-born parents. The language they hear at home and among their friends is an odd patois, almost a dialect, Polish or Italian or Spanish or Russian with a smattering of English—and such English! Joseph Auslander in that sensitive and deep-reaching poem, "Steel," has called it "English as hard and toothless as a skull." Here is the finest flower of the English language, abridged for their interest and abilities; here is the concentrated adventure of the world at their finger-tips.

Many of them have never traveled twenty miles from their homes. They have known a small world, the crowded streets of their own neighborhood, alleys and back yards, and forbidden playgrounds along the railroad tracks and waterfront; here is the panoply of twenty centuries spread out before them. I think that I would be glad to change places with them, at least for long enough to read my way through certain library shelves that I have in mind. I like often to stroll among them and watch the titles of the books so that I can imagine the pictures in their minds.

Here is a lad who can set up a radio with his eyes closed, deeply engrossed in the mechanical exploits of the Connecticut Yankee, hailed as "Sir Boss" at the court of King Arthur. By his side a lean eager Jewish boy rushes through another scene, the dying King Arthur at night in a chapel with a broken cross; the ocean beats on one side, and on the other "lay a great water and the moon was full."

A little Italian bootblack reads, wide-eyed, of Billy Bones sitting with his cutlass on the table before him in the Admiral Benbow Inn, leading the quaking country people in the roaring chorus that drowns the sound of the storm outside, "Drink and the devil have done for the rest, Yo Ho Ho, and a bottle of rum!"

A brown little fellow whose parents are only a decade removed from the long sunny year of the tropics reads of Buck, the sledge-dog, ripping and slashing his murderous way among the Alaskan Indians who have slain his master. A bright-eyed Italian girl dreams over an old legend of her people, King Robert of Sicily, with all his sounding titles, turned into a jester by an angel and crouching upon his bed-straw with an ape for councillor. A flaxen-haired Swedish boy watches the Grecian ships sail off into the sunset, leaving the great wooden horse before the doomed and shining towers of Troy.

Two lads, side by side, are reading books that are oddly alike: one follows, grinning appreciatively, the "lean and foolish knight" who "forever rides in vain" in the encounter with the windmills, while his friend chuckles over our inglorious American Quixote, matching the heels of his plow-horse against the phantom steed of the Headless Horseman.

Sitting nearby is a placid German girl smiling maternally over the crinolined adventures of Beth and Amy and Jo and Meg. Her friend, a flashing-eyed Polish lass, blinks away tears at the tale of the Italian boy who loved Golden Bells, the Chinese princess, as told by a dreaming Irishman.

Other volumes are piled at their elbows, crowds of characters for their minds: the thin scarred face of Villon as he shivers in the snow on a chilly Paris dawn and idly envies the wealth of the rich old man who has just thrust him out his door; Mark Antony humbly arousing the mob to avenge the death of Caesar; the Cid, dead in his armor, riding at the front of his army; old Ben Franklin recounting like a village sage the beginnings of a new world; Tiny Tim hurrahing the Christmas goose, and shouting "God bless us, every one"; King Richard the Lion-hearted drinking and singing with a deer-stealer in a hut in a forest; and Robin Hood, himself, shooting his last arrow to mark his grave.

Soon the bell will call them back from their long journeys into other years and other lands. Tomorrow they may travel again, and for many tomorrows. But I can never go those ways again, with all the people new and strange. I know them all; I can never meet them again for the gay and thrilling first time.

Strophe

The wind rests; the shaken boughs
Let fall the severed leaf through the still air
And silence echoes there.
The birds in musical carouse
Close beak on note . . . and quietness grows rare
With song recalled unto a feathered breast,
Strophe and rest.
So the heart pauses, so the leaf settles,
Printing its scarlet on the remembering earth
Moulded to richness and the colors of metals
And we are blessed
As with a holy name.
Then on life's hearth
The salamander silence leaps in flame
And follow, song and mirth.

MARIE GILCHRIST.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The World Waits

THE QUALITY of melodrama is, perhaps, a little chilled in this play of a south polar exploring party, but the chill is not due to the temperature of the polar regions. It is due, rather, to the fact that George F. Hummel, the playwright, seems to be trying to prove something not the province of the theatre to prove.

In many respects, the play is excellent. When it fails, the failure is in matters of major structure rather than in individual scenes, and in general viewpoint rather than details of dialogue or of action. Mr. Hummel has carried us to the interior of a camp in the Hartley Expedition to the Antartic, where a widely assorted group of men including aviators and college professors and youthful adventurers as well as experienced seamen and explorers are fretting at the delay in the arrival of the relief ship that is supposed to take them home to civilization. As days pass and the ship fails to cross the barrier, and as winter storms threaten to isolate the little camp entirely, the tension increases. Tempers get out of control. Faith in the leader vanishes. Faced by possible death from impending food shortage, the men gradually approach a state of open mutiny, professors making common ground with pack carriers. Hartley, the leader, finds that grandiose words mean little to starving men. They no longer care whether or not "the world waits" to hear of their glorious exploits and sacrifices. They rally around Brice, the head aviator, who offers them their one chance of safety through iron discipline and instant organization for the emergency. The deposed Hartley takes his place in the ranks—only to be saved again by "the Hartley luck" when the relief ship succeeds at last in breaking through. The culminating irony is when Brice hands back the leadership to Hartley, and it is solemnly agreed that not one person "back home" shall ever learn the truth about his failure.

There is, of course, a certain superficial similarity between this play and "Journey's End." Both plays are written about men only. Both deal with the making and breaking of character in a life and death crisis. But here the similarity abruptly ends. "Journey's End" was an authentic transcript of events repeated a thousand times over. "The World Waits" suffers from the taint of being a special case. In a program note we read that "the author wishes to state that the incidents and characters of his play are in no sense, other than purely creative, based on any particular set of facts and incidents." But one might as well give assurance that a play about the first solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean was not based upon the feat of Charles Lindbergh. One has, at all times, a most uncomfortable feeling that "The World Waits" is trying to prove something about Admiral Byrd's first expedition. There are many startling parallels—the short wave radio carrying daily news back to the world's centers, the careful press-agentry of everything that happens, the general character of the personnel and a dozen other details. I am more than willing to accept the author's statement as true. I cannot conceive that anyone would deliberately attempt to undermine the reputation of a famous man by the back-door method of a play. But I do think that the author has made a serious mistake in taking for his material an expedition that so exactly parallels the Byrd enterprise, and that has, so far as I know, no other counterpart. The inference of criticism and exposure is always there, in spite of every denial, and not because of the author's intention, which was undoubtedly innocent, but because of the astonishing similarity between known facts and the author's creative fancy. This unfortunate coincidence quite spoiled my enjoyment of the play as a straightforward melodrama.

Frank Merlin who has produced and directed the play deserves high credit for excellent casting. The difficult and thankless rôle of Hartley is ably handled by Blaine Cordner, and Reed Brown, jr., makes the vigorous Brice a memorable figure of a man. Each character is handled as a strongly individual type by one of the best all-round casts of this season. The play not only has its moments of high drama, but also succeeds measurably in creating an atmosphere and a mood. It might be added that the author, following the fashion of the day, finds himself unable to give the theatrical effect of strong language without resorting to the usual string of blasphemies. As usual, however, he demonstrates the fallacy of the argument from realism by refraining from the more downright vulgarities which might offend the great god taste. (At the Little Theatre.)

Spring in Autumn

BEING unable to attend this latest play of Sierra's, I must report on its good points and its failures as given to me by an able substitute. "The action of the play," I am told, "springs from the inner conflict of a Spanish opera singer between her artistic temperament and ambitions and her love for her husband and daughter. Sierra's genius for interpreting homely detail develops a rather outworn theme into a delightful evening's entertainment.

"The production, however, is distinctly uneven and fails to achieve the smoothness so essential to conveying the curious mood of Sierra's setting. Specifically, the production is not Spanish in atmosphere. It has the feeling of a somewhat self-conscious stage conception of what Spanish atmosphere ought to be. The difference is important, more so in the case of a play by Sierra or by the Quintero brothers than in the case of most plays by European authors. For these Spanish writers let their plays grow right out of the homely details of local life. Half of the charm of their writing comes from the spontaneous freshness and accuracy of this detail. The least touch of self-consciousness in rendering their mood into English spoils the essence of their plays more certainly than even a deliberate failure to select Spanish types as actors.

"Blanche Yurka's interpretation of the opera singer is hugely amusing at times, but lacks a certain consistency. Esther Dale catches the spirit of the play excellently as the old nurse on the Andalusian estate." (At Henry Miller's Theatre.)

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COMMUNICATIONS

INDICTMENT

Albany, N. Y.

TO the Editor: I am a trifle late, but I cannot let Mr. Goulding's "Indictment" pass without a petition for a change of venue. As our Mayor would say, "The fair name of our city has been impugned," and if this thing is not nipped in the bud, goodness knows of what else we may not be cited as a horrible example.

I was not aware that the Catholics of this two-thirds Catholic community had any complaint about the fairness or liberality of Mr. Goulding's newspaper or, for that matter, of his two rivals in the field. Our mugs and the mugs of our children grace the rotogravure with flattering frequency and our social activities are proclaimed impartially with those of our co-citizens of other beliefs. When you intimate, Mr. Goulding, that one mug doesn't make a newspaper, you destroy a major illusion. I have thought it was our fatal and not our numerical beauty.

Our spiritual leaders and, in fact, the promoters of any distinctly "Catholic" activity such as the Forum and the Industrial Conference Mr. Goulding mentions, have always been profound in their gratitude for any cooperation supplied by the local press. I have detected in that profundity a certain element of the it-was-not-ever-thusness, but apparently I am not a good detective. It appears the press has been grateful to us for providing a quick-turn-over. Our acrobatic numbers.

It is an old Roman Catholic custom to get information concerning such things as Jubilee Years from our pastors. And while I thought it kind of Mr. Goulding's newspaper to mention the event, I was in full possession of not only the history and significance of the Jubilee Year, but also the rules governing the individual Catholic's observance of it. The painstaking pastor who supplied all this information has a listed phone, too. I certainly never suspected the inaccessible episcopacy, the uncommunicative chancery, the unlisted phones and the lethargic laity lurking behind that short paragraph.

This Jubilee Year episode, however, strikes my ungracious mind as a test of the running block. If the subject matter had been a decision of the Rota with the enticing possibility of the headline, "Pope Grants Another Divorce," would the press have puttered around in benign solicitude for our proper enlightenment? Just a day ago, a local Catholic school product was married before a Justice and instantaneously recanted. A doctrinal nicety was involved which apparently even the product could have elucidated, but no insuperable barriers frustrated a front-page story with photographs, pedigree and jocose quips about "changing one's mind."

THE COMMONWEAL is capable of fighting its own battles, but ethics is ethics, and oh, the bitterness of my trampled civic pride. I'll be down to see you, Mr. Goulding, with a marked copy of THE COMMONWEAL the next time I want a still of the What-sis Club poised fetchingly about a banquet table. Lazy we may be, but thick, never!

LORETTA REILLY.

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editor: In recent issues of your paper mention was made of the difficulty in obtaining information regarding Catholic news. There is another feature which might be considered, that is, getting it in an authoritative way, the best way of putting it before the non-Catholic public.

I have felt for some time that the Catholic body in this country have overlooked one of the principal means of reaching those outside the fold, and that is the daily newspaper. Thus, for instance, in the October 9 issue of the *Globe Democrat*, the only St. Louis morning paper, there were four articles from Protestant ministers and one covering Y. M. C. A. activities. It seems Monday's issue covers the several different sects for the previous day. What is noticeable is that not one is shown from a Catholic source. About the only time one appears is when the Archbishop delivers his monthly sermon, each first Sunday.

There is no reason why each week an article could not be carried from some prominent Catholic preacher. The different orders in their turn could arrange this, and there is no question but that it would reach thousands of those outside the fold who are eager to receive the word. Also each week some activity in the Catholic church calendar could be included under the "Church Forum," a weekly feature of the paper. I have sent in one or two myself.

I refer to this not only on account of the opportunities overlooked in this vicinity, but the same applies as far as I have been able to observe all over this country, and likely throughout the world—at a great loss to the Church.

JOSEPH EDWARDS.

Hollis, N. Y.

TO the Editor: C. A. Hawkins, commenting on Stuart D. Goulding's "Indictment," asks "What can you and I do to remedy the situation?"

I should like to offer the following suggestions:

(1) Bring up the subject of Mr. Goulding's article in any organization, e. g., Holy Name Society, Blessed Virgin Society, that the parish may have.

(3) Let the society appoint or elect a member whose duty will be to send to the local papers and to the city dailies too, if the matter be of sufficient interest to warrant it, reports of the activities of that particular parish.

If objection is made here that there are very few, if any, activities worthy of the attention of the reading public, such objection is tantamount to a confession of lack of zeal on the part of both clergy and laity.

Items of church news that will attract the attention and even arouse the enthusiasm of the general reading public are reports about: reading clubs, i. e., study of current literature and great literature of all ages; present-day problems club, considering the church's plan in every problem; dramatics; charity.

The call to action is imperative. Open up the auditoriums and basements of our churches. Let the light therein shine literally and figuratively. Invite non-Catholics. Priests and people get together!

ELEANOR MONOHAN.

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CRITICIZING THE COMMONWEAL

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editor: Your correspondent, Mr. Charles B. Hedden, took THE COMMONWEAL rather severely to task in its last issue. In desiring you to change your policy he pays you a high compliment: the editors have shown themselves so very capable in handling articles of general interest that they are now encouraged to go into more specialized fields of writing for their material.

Unless I am mistaken, however, THE COMMONWEAL was founded to present the topics of the day from the standpoint of a Catholic layman, and I for one am convinced that it has fulfilled its office admirably. Exception might be taken at times to its position but that is hardly a reason for condemning its general policy.

Mr. Hedden would have you refuse to publish any opinions that go beyond the traditional policy of the Church. That is commendable advice if it be taken to mean that you should not swerve from orthodoxy. If, however, he would wish you to confine your work to restating the position of the Church on questions long since decided, without any attempt to apply Catholic principles to present-day problems, he mistakes the function of a review such as yours and might possibly be accused of obscurantism.

Your correspondent would include among opinions that go beyond the traditional policy of the Church, articles dealing with economics and politics, in a practical way, and this is the point I would especially challenge. He seems to be unaware of the fact that the Church has a very definite policy with regard to these matters, a policy that has been restated many times over in encyclicals, bishops' pastorals and the statements of recognized Catholic societies. Some strong things might be said on this point. In the face of the long-established dogma of the Manchester economists concerning the separation of economics from the scope of morality it has been an up-hill struggle to convince the great mass of Americans that there is a necessary relation between the two sciences. And now, when we are at last beginning to succeed, Mr. Hedden would have you give over the good work, perhaps the most important work you are doing, as transient and ephemeral.

Within the month you published an article on the dairy situation in New York State that should have made the blood of every good man run hot. It was typical of the articles Mr. Hedden would condemn as having too little weight for your review. May I remind him that justice is to be preferred to much knowledge, and that only by making such conditions public can we hope to arouse people to a realization of the injustice that flourishes under the guise of economic necessity?

A great many of us have lived too long in a tower of ivory, have thought it beneath our dignity and the dignity of our reviews to fight the battle of the poor in a practical way. The social question has been discussed by Catholic moralists for a very long time in a way that had the philosophical appeal Mr. Hedden so much desires. We have not been wanting in the practical works of charity, but what we need today, and what we are mercifully getting, is action, definite, sustained action in the practical work of getting justice done. We look to reviews like THE COMMONWEAL for an intelligent discussion of the principles of Catholic Action and their application.

If practical social action involves the soiling of our feet we can at least have the satisfaction of knowing that Our Lord has trod the same dusty road. We, no less than others, can become permeated with what Nicholas Berdyaev calls the bourgeois spirit, merely another word for comfortable indifferences to the problems of Christ's poor.

Surely, if Mr. Hedden prefers history, philosophy and theology, he can find these subjects ably presented in the special journals. Let THE COMMONWEAL go on in the good work it is doing.

GERARD G. GRANT.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In your issue of November 3, under the caption "Criticizing the Commonweal" is a letter signed Charles B. Hedden which aroused again in my mind a question of interest to many Catholics.

Do the majority of them really wish the Church to be known through the press to non-Catholics merely as an enlarged sodality, of interest only to its members, touching only faintly and timidly through its laity the great questions of the day? The Church has already suffered in this country from the parochialism and ignorance of a section of her laity—well-meaning, doubtless, but its units hugging privilege to their breasts blindly, and apparently oblivious of the fact that the Universal Church belongs to the entire world and not to Irish or Germans or Italians or any race or country which desires to limit her to its own interpretation and its own peculiar temperament.

Already there are too many Catholic magazines in which the outside world has not the slightest interest (and who could blame it, seeing how parochial and of inferior literary quality some of them are?) and what is needed are publications like THE COMMONWEAL, the consummate *Catholic World*, the *Sign* and the brilliantly edited *America*. I know from experience that non-Catholics read these publications eagerly. More power to THE COMMONWEAL and its admirable policies.

As to Mr. Hedden's statement that economics and politics are among the most transient things on earth—they may be, but the obligation remains to illuminate them from above.

Mr. Hedden's blithe assumption that "we all know our St. Thomas" filled me with envy. I for one can have no place among those gregarious Thomists; remembering the experience of a non-Catholic friend of mine who took his Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of London, choosing for the subject of his thesis the "Summa." He spent five solid years on this monograph and even then feared that "the scholarly Jesuits might shoot holes in it."

Again more power to THE COMMONWEAL and its policies.

ANNA MCCLURE SHOLL.

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UNWHOLESOME FARE

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

TO the Editor: I have to keep hammering away at the hard heads of Mr. Will Hays and his movie men to make any impression on them, and to show them that the present corruption of the movies is hurting their business and will eventually destroy that business. "It pays to be good."

Here is an excellent example of what a movie ad should not be: "The kind of a romance you would like to have! And the kind of a man you would like to be! . . . Admired by men—and envied! Adored by women! Gay . . . audacious . . . carefree, utterly charming . . . who did everything wrong . . . but who was always right in a woman's eye!"

If this is the kind of man American men would like to be, then God help American men, and God help America! What man who has any tattered shred of decency clinging to him would like to be an utterly unscrupulous sheik and scoundrel who sooner or later inevitably lands in the penitentiary? The ad says that this charming fellow is admired by men and adored by women, but in real life the chap who is adored by women is usually cordially detested by men. A Don Juan or a Lovelace is never a "man's man." He shuns men and is shunned by men until at the last he is forced to mingle with men in the prison workshop.

I advise deacon Hays to brush up on the Bible and on prayer, and find out what men and women ought to be like. Let him take these gay, charming, audacious, carefree movie "sheiks" to church with him. That would be a better place for them than the silver screen of the movies where they corrupt the youth of the nation and the youth of the world. For, according to the words of Christ: "Whosoever shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea."

CHARLES HOOPER.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Heaven knows Catholic Action has many and intricate problems to solve and conditions to cure, but to me one of the gravest is most simply solved. I refer to the immoral moving picture.

The indifferent and the deliberately vicious operator will swiftly respond to but one thing: the box-office receipts. All the talk in the world at Catholic conventions, in the Catholic press, is just so much wasted effort. Where a bad picture is shown and continued after protests, let the Catholic patrons absent themselves for a month. Should conditions get any worse, whole cities could withdraw their patronage, not noisily to give the operator the publicity he craves, but quietly without fanfare.

It might take a National Week of "Abstain from Movies" to convince Hollywood that Christian standards must prevail.

M. V. M.

BOOKS

The Spread of Bolshevism

World Revolution and the U. S. S. R., by Michael T. Florinsky. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

THIS study has a very real value since it presents in English a great number of excerpts from official Soviet documents which have thus far been available only in Russian. It is to be regretted that Dr. Florinsky has handled his material in a superficial manner. His ability as a scholar cannot be questioned. In his zeal to deal objectively with his subject he has fallen into many illogical and inconsistent statements which are at times most confusing to the reader. Indeed, the reader wonders if perhaps the confusion of these statements is not the logical result of the author's attempt to find in his own mind the "other side's" argument.

"A new book on Soviet Russia may need a word of explanation. Most authors writing on the U. S. S. R. put due emphasis on the fact that the former Russian Empire is governed today by a Communist dictatorship, but, to the best of my knowledge, none of them have attempted to give a more or less complete and comprehensive survey of the extremely important changes which have taken place in the ideas of the Russian Communist Party and of the Third International."

Thus Dr. Florinsky introduces his thesis. To this reader's mind he has failed to demonstrate it. His work cannot be considered complete when it omits therefrom any mention of the Constitution of the U. S. S. R., a document upon which one should suppose such a study to be based. His work is not comprehensive, either, because it is overburdened by quotations which make the task of the general reader a very arduous one, and because it contains a great number of contradictions at times quite difficult to understand. Furthermore, Dr. Florinsky has not persuaded his readers (this reader, at least) that there have been any fundamental changes in the ideas of the Russian Communist party and of the Third International.

The study is based principally on the works of Lenin and on the verbatim reports of congresses and conferences of the Russian Communist party and of the Third International. Dr. Florinsky divides the history of Soviet rule in Russia into four periods which are covered in five chapters: first, the period of "Sturm und Drang" (1918-1920), followed by that of "Low Tide" (1921-1924); then the struggle between Trotsky and Stalin for the slogan "Socialism in One Country," which ended in Stalin's victory; a chapter on "International Implications of the New Doctrine," and an analysis of present-day policies under the heading, "Towards Cooperation."

There is no doubt that Dr. Florinsky has made a laudable effort to interpret the much discussed policies of Bolshevik leaders represented either through the Soviet government or through the Third International. He has failed, however, to convince this reader that his interpretation is the right one. One of the resolutions of the second congress of the Third International, held in 1921,

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reads: "The Communist International is the concentrated will of the revolutionary proletariat of the world. Its mission consists in the organization of the working class of the whole world for the overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of Communism. The Third International is a militant unit which must unite the revolutionary forces of the world."

Seven years later, the sixth congress (the last to-date) adopted a program, which is described in the preamble to be "the program of struggle for the world proletarian dictatorship, the program of struggle for world Communism." Even a casual observation of the wording will reveal the identity of ideas and of spirit. Yet, Dr. Florinsky wants us to believe that the Third International had its teeth pulled, and that from a weapon of aggression and destruction it has evolved into an instrument of peaceful defense. Analyzing the program of the Third International, Dr. Florinsky permits himself a few unwarranted sneers: "It will be readily admitted that it contains enough revolutionary phraseology to send thrills of horror down the spinal columns of the timorous spinsters of both sexes and of all weak-kneed statesmen who believe that the plague of Communism can be imported and disseminated like a contagious disease, that a nation or a part of it can be infected with Bolshevism as if Bolshevism were typhus or scarlet fever."

Dr. Florinsky tries to convince the reader that the Soviet Union is determined to preserve peace, and he quotes for his defense, Mr. Walter Duranty, whose interpretations of facts are always unique, saying "that the Bolshevist Kremlin today regards the growth of the revolutionary movement in Europe with real anxiety." But on another page the author quotes a resolution of the sixth congress of the Third International which reads: "There is a glaring contradiction between the imperialists' policy of piling up armaments and their hypocritical talk about peace. There is no such contradiction, however, between the Soviet government's preparations for defense and revolutionary war, and a consistent peace policy. Revolutionary war waged by the proletarian dictatorship is but a continuation of its revolutionary peace policy, 'by other means.'" The author is forced to add: "It must be admitted that this is rather confused, and not very convincing." It is certainly in contradiction with all that the author has to say about the defensive peace attitude of the U. S. S. R. and their sincere desire of cooperation with the capitalist world.

LEONID I. STRAKHOVSKY.

England's War Prime Minister

War Memoirs of David Lloyd George. 1914-1915. Boston. Little, Brown and Company. $4.00.

THIS, the first volume of Lloyd George's "Memoirs," is a work of extraordinary interest, not because of the merit of the writing itself, though that is competent enough, but because of the candor with which Britain's great War Premier discusses events and personalities. Of course a reader would be naive indeed to take all of the judgments expressed in the book at their face value.

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Lloyd George's reputation for political sinuousity was not attained without some reason, and the man's extraordinary plausibility must always be taken into consideration. Perhaps his etching of the figure of Sir Edward Grey bites a little too deep, and bears marks of the resentment of him who was once called "the little Welsh solicitor" for one whose virtues and weaknesses were the product of an aristocratic tradition; perhaps his insistence on the complete ignorance of the Cabinet as to the commitments made by the government to France may be taken in a slightly Pickwickian sense; and yet by and large the book bears the unmistakable stamp of truth. And it is an appalling tale of weakness, ineptitude and vacillation which he tells of the political leaders of those July days in 1914, days in which no responsible ruler except perhaps Bechtold really wanted war. Lloyd George puts the quietus pretty effectively on the oft-made charge that the war was the work of a group of old men. He shows that these men were weak and stupid in allowing events to lead them to the brink, but that they one and all recoiled when it was, it was true, too late, from the abyss below them, an abyss into which they were pushed by the generals aided by the mass psychology of the young. It was only the general staffs of Germany, Austria and Russia who knew their minds and had the force to make them count.

But how tragic was the later incompetence of all the general staffs in the very field in which they should have known their business, the field of war itself, is perhaps the most appalling revelation made in Lloyd George's "Memoirs." And in Lloyd George's case it was not wisdom after the event. He proves in his letters and in his memorials to Asquith and the other leaders, his belief in the futility of attempting to break the Western front. Again and again before the defection of Bulgaria he urged the dispatch of a large Anglo-French army to Salonica. Had such an army been dispatched, there is little doubt but that Bulgaria would have sided with the Allies, or at least have been neutral, Constantinople have been taken, and Serbia saved its bloody purgatory. Moreover, it is altogether probable that Austria invaded from the south would have crumpled in a few months, and the war have been definitely ended in 1915. Briand held with Lloyd George, but Joffre would have none of it, and the result was the shambles of Champagne, of the Somme, of Passchendale, of Vimy Ridge, and the Chemin des Dames. In short, George and Briand, the Celtic politicians, were far better strategists than the soldier Joffre.

For the general reader it is unfortunate that Lloyd George does not spend more time on this portion and less on the munition crisis. It is perfectly true that in forcing his will against the idiocy of the British War Office and in forming the coalition government, Lloyd George saved the Allies. The War Office with Kitchener at its head was living in the time of the Boer War and its insistence on shrapnel and on the traditional methods of turning out ammunition and guns almost resulted in disaster. But a hundred pages of the details of the fight for efficiency is too much. With this exception the first volume makes one long for other volumes of the "Memoirs."

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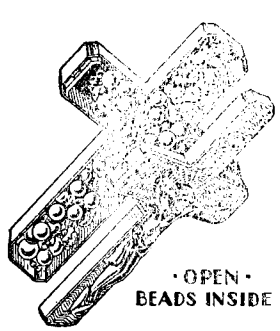
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The Much Maligned Activity

The Anatomy of Criticism, by Henry Hazlitt. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

MR. HAZLITT has cast his examination of the principles of criticism in a form which, as he points out, has been used from the time of Plato through that of Dryden down to the present day—the dialogue. That form, if it is not too obvious to say so, has its advantages and its disadvantages; it allows a certain dramatic juxtaposition of ideas which makes for increased vividness and that same juxtaposition gives an appearance of more than usual lack of bias; because of its indirectness, it is a form lacking in economy and, for the same reason, the author's affirmations are not always entirely clear. However, recalling the "Phaedo," "Of Dramatick Poesie," and the dialogues of Landor, one is tempted to point out that these generalizations are inspired by the immediate instance. In the beginning the persons of Mr. Hazlitt's dialogue are four: Elder, an English professor of fifty, Middleton, an editor of thirty-five, Young, a book reviewer of twenty-five, and Arthur, a popular novelist. Arthur, not altogether at ease in the company of those whom he regards as his natural enemies, soon goes off to play golf and leaves the others to carry on their discussion for the next two days. Their conclusions are so concisely summed up by Middleton at the end of their arguments that an account in other words would be wasteful.

"We have decided that the much maligned activity of criticism . . . is . . . as inevitable as breathing. . . . We have seen that pure subjectivism and pure objectivism both come logically to an impasse, that the final arbiter of literary values is the social mind. . . . We have agreed that posterity's judgments are not infallible . . . but . . . on the whole remarkably sound and comprehensive. . . . We have seen . . . that the great writer must at once be traditionalist and experimentalist . . . that all art involves some interpretation or idealization of nature. . . . We have appeared to devote a good deal of our time to establishing the obvious. . . ."

The obvious comes in chiefly over discussion of technical aspects of journalistic criticism, e.g., is a reviewer justified in attacking a book by an established writer but praising an inferior book by a beginner, on the grounds that a man's work must be scrutinized more closely as his reputation grows? The reconciliation of the objective and subjective attitudes through the medium of the social mind must be accepted on Middleton's authority; the social mind as described in the dialogues is most vague and what of it does come clear seems sophistical to at least one very minor practitioner of the profession Mr. Hazlitt analyzes. While the proponent of the social mind foresees the mute cultivation of his own exquisite feelings to which the subjectivist is logically driven, he does not admit absolute values by which literature can be judged (presumably holding the same absurd notion as the subjectivist that the critic with standards rejects as worthless all not perfectly congruous with his ideals); values, he holds, do not exist except as human evaluation of phenomena, yet these evaluations are kept from being purely personal whims

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because the human mind is an organic part of the social mind, formed by economic, cultural, climatic conditions, et cetera, which forces on the individual mind its own recognition and hierarchical ordering of values.

What this is, of course, is merely a quantitative extension of the subjectivist position (as well as something that seems no great distance from determinism); if the critic acting on the assumption of the social mind is less likely to err than the simple impressionist, it is because widespread notions are apt to have some pragmatic truth. But the pride of self which makes the impressionist critic is strong, and the advocate of the social mind has, finally, small defense against it and the danger of entire subjectivism; it is, therefore, pleasing to see that Mr. Hazlitt, in this book, tends toward the angelic side, that of Elder (whom one takes to be a representative of humanism, although he obviously has not read Mr. More and is a great admirer of Kant and Hegel). Mr. Hazlitt's writing is clear and lively; the general reader need not fear his book.

GEOFFREY STONE.

Autobiography of the New Negro

Along This Way, by James Weldon Johnson. New York: The Viking Press. $3.50.

LIKE any other human question, the Negro situation is not static. White people generally either fail or refuse to recognize the simple fact that the Negro of today is not the Negro of yesterday. They like to go on thinking of him as a servant, a comedian, a nonentity; seldom do they think of him as an intelligent being experiencing the whole range of human emotions, and with ambitions, reactions and thoughts similar to their own. The category of dehumanized inferiority to which white America automatically consigns any being with a black or brown skin is, in the opinion of many, the most obstinate difficulty in the way of getting a dispassionate and intelligent hearing for the Negro.

Consequently, it may come as a shock to many to learn that not a few Negroes in this country (many with "blue blood" surging through their veins) have reached the pinnacles of successful achievement in the face of almost insurmountable obstacles. James Weldon Johnson is one.

In turn, country school teacher, city high school principal, editor, lawyer, popular song writer of Broadway with a nation singing his songs, star of the stages of the United States and England, poet and prose writer of distinction, United States Consul to Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, and Corinto, Nicaragua, executive of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and, at sixty, professor of creative literature at Fisk University—it would seem that half the man's life would have overflowed the cup of any outstanding American citizen.

At sixty-two years of age, this amazing cosmopolitan—at home everywhere in the world except in the land of his birth and citizenship—takes time to look back. The result is "Along This Way," a most pleasant-reading autobiography. Most autobiographies are painfully egocentric, and particularly is this true of the life stories of Negroes, but Mr. Johnson has written so that one is

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not conscious of the ego. Considered merely as a human document the book is out of the ordinary.

"Along This Way," however, is more than just another autobiography. Intentionally or not, it is the most cleverly written indictment of the American caste system which has come to hand. The narrative of a full life is simply a vehicle for an intelligent dissertation which might appropriately be titled, "A Composite Autobiography of the New Negro." As a teacher, Mr. Johnson has presented his lesson well; as lawyer, he argues his case convincingly; as artist, he achieves his effect subtly.

The new Negro, as typified by Mr. Johnson, is human enough to be sensitive to insults and unreasoning prejudices, but he is beginning to learn to laugh at the white man. He is beginning to see that the surest way to puncture the balloon of Nordic pride is to snicker at white efforts to embarrass him. As Mr. Johnson points out, "for the grim white man in the backwoods of the South this deep laughter of the Negro should be the most ominous sound that reaches his ears." No proud man can bear to be laughed at, and so it seems that Mr. Johnson has struck at the white man's most vulnerable point.

JOHN T. GILLARD.

Travel in Arabia

The Empty Quarter, by H. StJ. Philby. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $4.00.

IN "THE EMPTY QUARTER" Mr. Philby tells the fascinating story of his crossing of the Great South Desert of Arabia, the Rub' al Khali, around which so many legends cluster. It was Mr. Philby's destiny to disprove some of these legends in his journey; in compensation he has painted for us a vivid picture of those tameless wastes of sand, which constitute the real desert.

The author's expedition was more than usually well equipped. He had thirty-two camels of the famous 'Umaniya breed, the blood-royal of the camel world, and it was the wonderful endurance of these animals—at times they averaged more than forty miles per day—which brought the expedition safely through its perilous journey. The story is full of thrills, and follows the trail of romance from the famous well of Maquaina—171 feet from curb to water—to Wabar, fabled city of the sands. But alas! the castellated battlements of Wabar, under Mr. Philby's scrutiny, turn into mere escarpments of rock, surrounding what may be craters of extinct volcanos or the tombs of gigantic meteorites. And so this famous city, where King 'Ad of the Arabian Nights held court, vanishes like a mirage from the face of the desert. Wherever else Wabar may be, declares Mr. Philby, it is not in the Great South Desert, that "empty quarter" of Arabia.

Mr. Philby's recital touches on so many interesting scientific and paleontological problems—for example, the "roc's" egg and the curious phenomenon of the "singing sands"—that the aid of various appendices compiled by recognized authorities is highly welcome. The author's careful plotting of the terrain over which he passed has resulted in excellent maps; there is an admirable index.

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Briefer Mention

Frontiers of Medicine, by Morris Fishbein, M.D. New York: The Century Co.. $1.00.

THIS is one of the Century of Progress Series issued in sympathy with the Exposition in Chicago. The author is the editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and might be expected to give an excellent résumé of phases of the history of medicine; this he has done except for the old wheeze that "the progress of science was halted by religious fanaticism" during the Middle Ages. Accordingly he has given five pages out of two hundred tc the thousand years of the Middle Ages. Yet Sudhoff, acknowledged authority in the history of medicine, proclaims that the Middle Ages discovered anesthesia and antisepsis and practised both, eradicated leprosy, organized quarantine against contagious diseases, and built beautiful hospitals. Seven magnificent textbooks of surgery have come to us from the Middle Ages, and it is surprising how many modern surgical developments they anticipated. It is time for people who write about the Middle Ages to know something about them.

What I Like, by William Lyon Phelps. New York: Charles Scribner's sons. $2.75.

THIS book is well named and the author well known. In these two things are the essentials of it beyond the simple facts that it is 718 pages long and contains selections of writings from 111 sources. This indicates its amplitude and diversity. It is strictly *hors d'oeuvres,* the selections are samples that should titivate the appetite for more; and occasionally, of course, when the appetite is jaded, it is not a bad thing to make a moderate meal of *hors d'oeuvres;* it rewakens somnolent tastes and gives one some new ideas for more substantial repasts. As the author declares in his preface, it should also be an excellent book to have by one's bed, or for one's guests, for a little delightful desultory reading before snapping off the light, and that not because it is dull, for dullness would fail to take one out of the elbowing preoccupations of the day being left behind.

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